



## SECTION TWO

**IAN RICHARDSON**  
Francis Urquhart  
comments, at length



**EXPLOSIVE**  
Britain's Secret  
bombing campaign



## Failed school to be shut down

JUDITH JUDD

Hackney Downs, the first school to be forcibly removed from council control, cannot be turned round and should close, a Government-appointed team of experts said yesterday.

The final decision about the London comprehensive rests with Gillian Shephard, the Secretary of State for Education, who said she was minded to accept the recommendation. It is the first time central government has intervened in the closure of an individual school under new powers which allow the Government to send "hit squads" into failing schools.

The report from the first education association which was sent into the school found very poor teaching, low literacy and numeracy, bad management and boys out of control.

It blamed poor management by the local authority and the school and a culture of low expectation among teachers. Most classes "were subject to constant disruption by a few disruptive boys whose loud, often coarse and occasionally foul-mouthed comments ensured little or no education took place."

Teachers gave high marks to scrawled, inaccurate and obviously rushed work and boys in their GCSE year struggled with simple arithmetic such as 168 divided by 12.

Richard Painter, the association's chairman, said: "Many of the staff appear to believe the school is uniquely disadvantaged. This is clearly not the case. There are many other schools in similar circumstances in Hackney and in the inner city elsewhere which provide a better quality of education." The state of the buildings was so appalling, he said, that £3m was needed to repair them.

But in many ways the school was generously financed. Because only 200 boys remain in a building for 1,000, £6,486 was being spent on each pupil compared with a national average of £2,400 for pupils in grant-maintained schools. The pupil-teacher ratio was 8-1, just half of the national average.

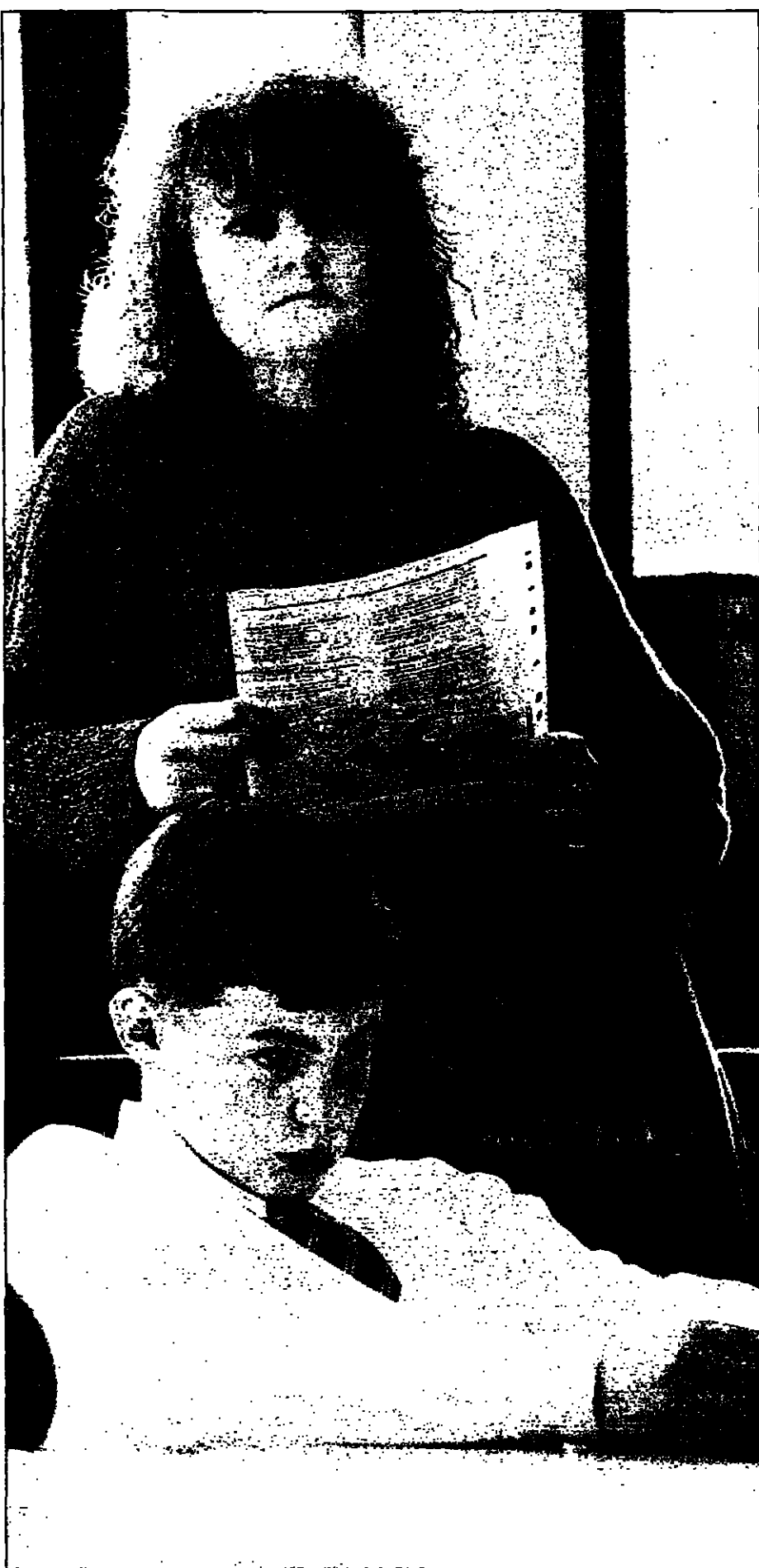
The report says the remaining pupils should be transferred to Homerton House, a boy's school a mile away. The 40 staff would be made redundant but would be able to apply for jobs at Homerton House.

The team could have decided to take over the school which would have become grant-maintained, if it believed big improvements were possible.

But the report says the school's difficulties are so fundamental and long-standing that it is questionable whether any school could recover from them without complete re-organisation.

Professor Michael Barber, one of the six association members, said: "It has had a long history of decline and conflict, poor relationships within the staff, poor relationships between the staff and the local authority and extreme union influence."

Pupils' anger, page 3  
Leading article, page 18



Grim lesson: A teacher and pupil at Hackney Downs School after hearing yesterday that it is likely to close in December. Photograph: Edward Webb

## Sleaze charge as Nolan finding rejected MPs oppose plan to reveal earnings

PATRICIA WYNN DAVIES  
Political Correspondent

A fresh row over Tory "sleaze" is set to erupt today following a decision by the Conservative majority on the committee examining the Nolan report to oppose the disclosure of MPs' earnings.

The committee chairman, Tony Newton, Leader of the House, and Conservative members say a new ban, agreed by all sides of the committee, on MPs tabling questions or engaging in other "advocacy" for outside interests makes disclosure of earnings irrelevant.

Labour yesterday launched a campaign to embarrass Tories opposed to disclosure in the run-up to what is likely to be an explosive Commons debate on Monday. MPs will be asked to vote on the committee's report and what could be a series of Labour amendments.

Committee members were locked in combat at a meeting yesterday over the timing of the reforms. Labour wants the changes to bite within three months, but Mr Newton has proposed a delay until the beginning of the next parliament.



Lord Nolan: Idea opposed

The committee majority's move, which Labour sources say was prompted by pressure from Cabinet ministers, could play badly for the Government. Jim Dowd, Labour MP for Lewisham West, asked at Prime Minister's Questions: "When will you stop trying to defend the saut-in-the-trough behaviour of so many on the benches behind you?"

But Conservative sources yesterday claimed the final shape of the package went "much further" than the recommendations of Lord Nolan's Committee on Standards in Public Life, which called for dis-

closure of outside earnings in full or within bands and an outright ban on MPs holding multi-client consultancies with PR firms or professional lobbyists. The latter recommendation is now a dead letter.

The advocacy ban, championed in committee by Lord Nolan, is likely to cover the tabling of written questions, Early Day Motions, amendments, oral questions or Private Members' Bills for any outside interest for which MPs are paid consultants. They would also be barred from speaking in debates or arranging meetings with ministers on behalf of clients and from tabling amendments to Bills in standing committee if they had relevant outside interests.

While Labour supports such a ban, it is opposed to further rewriting of the Nolan report.

The party yesterday decided to write to all Tory MPs in marginal constituencies to press them to support disclosure. The letters will ask whether they agree that Nolan should be implemented in full, whether they are one of the 100 Tory MPs referred to in Sunday newspapers

who are threatening to resign if Nolan is implemented and (to relevant MPs): "When are you going to reveal the extra-parliamentary earnings you have which are directly related to your parliamentary activities?"

While some Tories were confident last night that their rearranged action in getting agreement to the advocacy ban had tied Labour's hands on the issue of disclosure, the issue will ultimately turn on Monday's votes. Government sources were not over-confident last night that a Labour amendment calling for disclosure on top of the advocacy ban would necessarily be defeated.

Sir Teddy Taylor, Conservative MP for Southend East, said while the advocacy ban was a useful step forward "it doesn't deal with letters on behalf of clients or meetings with ministers... People will think there is something rather sleazy about the Conservative Party unless we agree to full disclosure."

Sir Gordon Downey, former Comptroller and Auditor General, was last night named as the first Parliamentary Commissioner for Standards, who will police the reforms.

## Playwright sentenced to death

MICHAEL SHERIDAN  
Diplomatic Editor

Writers, governments and human rights groups around the world protested to the Nigerian military regime yesterday after a "special tribunal" sentenced playwright and political activist Ken Saro-Wiwa to death.

Mr Saro-Wiwa, 54, has become a spokesman for the minority Ogoni ethnic group in southern Nigeria and has waged a campaign against environmental pollution by oil companies which operate in the area. The Anglo-Dutch giant, Shell, is the main oil producer in the region.

The tribunal, hand-picked by Nigeria's military rulers, found Mr Saro-Wiwa and three others guilty of the murders of

four men killed at a political rally last year and sentenced them to hang. The convicted men have no right of appeal.

The verdict brought swift condemnation from the Writers in Prison Committee of International PEN, a writers' organisation active in 90 countries on behalf of freedom of expression. Writers such as Ben Okri, Margaret Drabble and Harold Pinter demonstrated outside the Nigerian High Commission yesterday.

Describing the death sentences as "an outrage" the committee said the trial was politically motivated and alleged that witnesses had been bribed. The Foreign Office urged the Nigerian government to exercise clemency, calling the trial "a flawed judicial process".

Mr Saro-Wiwa's sentence is a blow to Britain's pursuit of diplomacy to bring about a return to civilian rule in Nigeria and it is certain to reinforce calls at next week's Commonwealth summit for sanctions against the regime. The Commonwealth Secretary General, Chief Emeaka Anyaoku, said "I appeal to the Nigerian authorities to spare his life."

Labour's foreign affairs spokesman, Tony Lloyd, called for wide-ranging sanctions to be imposed on Nigeria, including an incremental oil embargo

and the freezing of personal bank accounts held by members of the regime.

In New York, the Human Rights Watch group issued a call to Nigeria's military ruler, General Sani Abacha, to "comply with international obligations by commuting the death sentences in this case." Article 19, an international campaign against censorship, said the British Government and others should demand that the sentences be quashed before the Commonwealth summit opens.

Tackling the generals, page 4

## Tate saves visitors from poisoning by art

DAVID LISTER  
Arts Correspondent

The hazards of contemporary installation art rebounded on Britain's best known exponent yesterday when Damien Hirst's latest bizarre creation was withdrawn from the Tate Gallery on safety grounds.

*Mother and Child Divided* - four formaldehyde-filled tanks containing the severed halves of a cow and her calf - was to have to put on show to the public today, along with the other three shortlisted contenders for this year's Turner Prize.

Its controversial nature is illustrated by the catalogue entry: "The tanks are placed so that the viewer can pass between the divided animals, closely examining the exposed

entrails and flesh pressing against the glass. For some this is disturbing, even repulsive. For others, it generates a melancholic empathy."

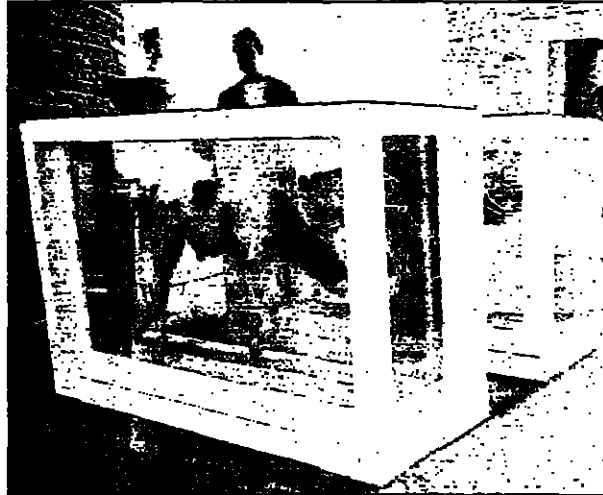
With a view, perhaps, to the reaction of others unmentioned - animal rights activists, for instance - officials at the Tate are insisting that the installation is not put on public show until it has been fitted with strengthened glass and seals to protect visitors from the effects of exposure to the chemicals if it were to spring a sudden leak.

Although the exhibit has previously been shown in Venice, the Tate is taking no chances and will not put it on show until the work is done - probably by Monday.

It is not the first time Hirst's works have caused problems or

attracted unwelcome or interventionist attention. Two years ago, his dead sheep exhibit - *Away from the Flock* - was doused in black ink while on show at another London gallery, and in New York a gallery decided to ban another piece depicting a rotting cow and bull.

The latter involved a hydraulic device being inserted into the two animals in a glass tank to simulate movement, and copulation, as they rotted away. The New York health department said it would pose a public health risk as it might explode, or even provoke vomiting, among spectators. Quoting *Catch 22*, officials decreed that if the tank was sealed it could shatter from the build up of gases, but if there was an outlet the odours would be overwhelming.



Artistic beef: The two halves of a calf that were due to have gone on display at the Tate today

### IN BRIEF

**Names' £300m hope**  
The loss-making Lloyd's of London Names won a landmark judgement in the High Court yesterday against auditors Ernst & Young which could produce massive damages payments estimated by some at £300m. Page 20

**Stadium choice delayed**  
The decision on where to build the proposed new national stadium went into extra time yesterday when the Sports Council announced that it had narrowed down the choice to Wembley or Manchester, and that a further three-to-six months of deliberation would be needed. Page 7

**Students in sum trouble**  
Many university maths and science students lack basic mathematical skills because of bad maths teaching in schools, says a new report. Students on university maths courses cannot carry out basic arithmetical and algebraic calculations and have little idea that maths requires precision. Page 8



**Quebec votes 'non'**  
Canada survived as a unified country by a margin that would fit in a football stadium. But the vote over autonomy for Quebec revealed a surge in separatist support. Page 11

**Body Shop comes clean**  
Body Shop International admitted that it has held talks with founders Anita and Gordon Roddick over a plan by them to take the company back into private ownership. Page 20



IRRETRIEVABLE BREAKDOWN

### COMMENT

**Terence Conran wants more of the National Lottery money to go to London.** Page 19

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**News Analysis: Could there ever be a genetic test for homosexuals?** Page 17

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**Weather: Most of the UK will be dry and bright though colder than yesterday. Eastern England and most of Scotland will be cloudy with showers.** Section Two, page 21

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Shopping in the future: Research shows town centres must diversify to survive as richest customers desert to retail parks



Closing down: A row of boarded-up shops in Sheffield city centre

Photograph: Steve Forrest/Guzzell

## High streets doomed by new breed of consumer

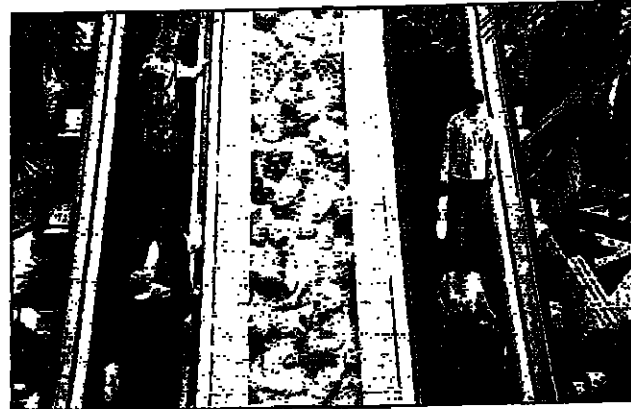
GLENDIA COOPER

The traditional high street shop has become the "symbol of a by-gone era" to a whole generation of young consumers, who prefer to shop instead at superstores and out-of-town retail parks, according to Mintel, the market researchers.

In the next century, it warns, the high street's only regular customers will be the poor, including pensioners, those on benefits and the least mobile.

Although almost half of all shoppers say they visit the high street regularly and a further 25 per cent say they visit it occasionally, Mintel says that it is becoming a source of "top-up" shopping – such as the occasional pint of milk – for the most affluent and mobile shoppers.

These richer shoppers are motivated by convenience and choice, the report *Survival of the*



Opening up: Meadowhall centre on Sheffield's outskirts

High Street concludes. Their preference for out-of-town centres is because everything is under one roof (64 per cent), followed by ease of parking (58 per cent) and free parking (53 per cent).

Retail parks have been helped vastly by the rise in car

ownership; it is projected by 1998 that there will be 25 million cars in the UK. Those least loyal to high street shops also show greatest enthusiasm for Sunday shopping.

The largest regional centres can even hit smaller superstores as well as high streets. The biggest ones are the Metro-Centre (Gateshead), Meadowhall (Sheffield), Lakeside (Thurrock), Brent Cross (north London) and Merry Hill (Dudley, West Midlands).

But nearly half of all shoppers said they would shop in the high street if there were a better choice of shop. Free parking would entice 42 per cent and more big name shops would attract 34 per cent.

"Limited choice is the inherent weakness of small town centres and high streets and today's discerning shopper thrives on wide choice, something which retailers in the high street and smaller town centres are evidently not providing," said Paul Rickard, Mintel's head of research.

Mintel also dismisses government claims that it has saved the high street by halting expansion of out-of-town malls. It seems that the superstore mentality is now so firmly ingrained

in us that government action is "too little, too late".

Planning controls were first relaxed in the early 1980s and rapid expansion by grocery and DIY retailers followed.

In July 1995, a consultation paper clarified the government's present thinking. It identified a "sequential approach" to planning, ensuring that preference was given to in-town rather than out-of-town developments.

"The changes in planning guidelines have come far too late to save the multitude of small businesses and specialist fresh food retailers whose businesses have suffered terminally at the hands of the multiples which operate over 900 grocery superstores," said Mr Rickard. He believes that for the high street to recover extensions on existing stores must be frozen along with new developments.

In 1995, multiple chains required an extra 17m sq ft of new space of which 11m sq ft was for retail parks based out of town. In comparison, between 1990 and 1994 the number of bakers fell by 32 per cent, grocers by 22 per cent and butchers by 10 per cent.

But while the high street butcher and baker are on their way out, the candlestick-maker might just survive. Mintel believes the high street can survive into the next century but in a different form. It will become increasingly dominated by doctors, solicitors, estate agents, restaurants and speciality shops.

Mr Rickard said: "We see the high street 2000 as being a lot smaller and containing fewer retail businesses than it does today. On the other hand, retail-based services, such as solicitors, will become an increasingly important focal point of visits to high streets."

## Gang ringleader jailed for murder

An Asian man who led a "cowardly and brutal" attack on a schoolboy was jailed for life for his murder at the Old Bailey yesterday.

Badrul Miah, 20, had boasted that they had "stabbed up a white boy" shortly after the knife attack on Richard Everitt, 15, in Somers Town, north London. Miah, of Euston, north London, was the ringleader of a 10-strong Asian gang who were out for revenge on another white boy last August.

Instead they chanced across Richard returning home with two friends from a game of football. While his two companions managed to escape, the less athletic Richard was surrounded. Moments later he died from a single stab wound in the back. It is not known who inflicted the fatal blow.

"The consequences are terrible – a totally innocent boy was cruelly killed for no apparent motive or reason. It was a wicked crime," said Mrs Justice Heather Steel. "Whoever inflicted that fatal wound has not been brought to justice."

Miah was also convicted of violent disorder on the night of Richard's murder and sentenced to three years. He had denied all charges.

A second youth – Showkat Akbar, 19, from Euston, was also convicted of violent disorder arising from a separate attack on another white youth by a gang of Asians in Somers Town earlier that night. He was jailed for three years.

A third defendant – Abdul Hai, 20, from Euston – was cleared of Richard's murder on order of the judge halfway through the trial and was freed.

Richard was murdered because he was white and in the path of a gang of marauding Asians bent on vengeance, the prosecution had told the court. "Their blood was up and therefore any white boy would do."

However, the judge suggested the attack may not have been racially motivated. "Where there are two opposing groups of young people, tensions can grow," she said, citing the example of clashes between Mods and Rockers.

### DAILY POEM

#### Delabole Quarry

By Jack Clemo

Carvings on slate in churches  
Must be odd: out of key  
With the clang in a gault crater,  
That hacked ragged hole  
Where nothing flawed can be mended  
Or softened, like clay rock, by a water rinse.

I peered down at the quarry once in childhood  
And felt its bald veined ridges  
A cold inferno, breathing a foreign climate  
More remote from my building mind  
Than the weirdest neurotic sculpture.

No basis for art was intended  
When a workman sliced his piece,  
Curious only to discover  
If it were sound for roofing  
Or whether the good pan looked big enough  
To support a decent field gate.

The roofs and posts protected me  
While I slept or wandered in Cornwall,  
But my art works on warmer material,  
And I've never seen a portrait on dull slate.

Jack Clemo was born in 1916 near St Austell, Cornwall. The son of a clay-kiln worker, he received only a village school education, and lived in poverty in his twenties, looking after his widowed mother. In 1948, his first novel, *Wilding Grief*, won an Atlantic Award in Literature from Birmingham University and a first volume of autobiography, *Confession of a Rebel*, which appeared a year later, confirmed him as a remarkable and original writer. His first collection of poetry, *The Clay Forge*, set amid the bleak clay wastelands of Cornwall, appeared in 1951. By 1955, he had become deaf and blind but his output of writing and poetry continued unabated. *The Cured Arm*, a collection from which this poem is taken, recently published by Bloodaxe, was completed just before his death in July 1994.

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مكتبة الأمل



Corporate ethic was 'to stretch law to its limits'

## Tycoon's son tells of personal shame over business crash

JOHN WILLCOCK  
Financial Correspondent

Kevin Maxwell told yesterday of his "personal sense of shame" at the suffering of pensioners caught up in the collapse of his father's business empire.

Kevin, who has been giving evidence in his own defence for 12 days at the Old Bailey fraud trial, said: "I feel a personal sense of shame at the failure and my share in that failure and the consequences of it."

He spoke of the company's creditors, bankers and workers, who had all been adversely affected by the crash. "Also for the pensioners who for a time suffered. I don't know anyone involved in the management of the business who does not feel immense regret for the consequences of the collapse."

The court was told that he had also suffered and had been made personally bankrupt for £400m. The order was automatically discharged in September because he co-operated with his trustees in bankruptcy.

The jury has heard that Robert Maxwell dominated everyone who worked for him. Kevin said that his father's overbearing administration had blighted his business education. "I regret that. The business was conducted in a culture where professional advisers, lawyers, advised my father how to stretch the law to its limits. A culture where professionals were servants and not advisers and teachers."

He said this attitude damaged the business and ultimately contributed to its collapse. "I regret the absence of board colleagues who would stand up to my father. I don't know anybody who stood up to him in the 10 years I was part of the business."

Questioned by his defence counsel, Alun Jones QC, Kevin denied he set out to defraud pensioners. "Our motivation

### The Maxwell Trial



Day 93

was not, to put it crudely, to sit down and defraud pensioners with my father or with others. It was to save the group.

"It was to maintain the value of the assets and to meet all of the obligations. I suppose my greatest regret was that in the end we failed."

The investor who offered to save the Maxwell group just days before its collapse in late 1991 with £400m of new capital was Roger Tamraz, a Middle Eastern industrialist who represented a syndicate of powerful investors, including, so Kevin was told, the Sheikh of Abu Dhabi. The crash came when the banks withdrew their support even though Mr Tamraz was actively arranging a three-year support plan.

Mr Jones asked if there had been a time when he thought he could or should get out of it all and leave the group. Kevin said it was a very difficult question and he had thought about it frequently in the years since 1991.

"No sane person would want to be at the Central Criminal Court on trial for conspiracy to defraud pensioners. I don't know anybody who would want to be in this situation in front of this court today."

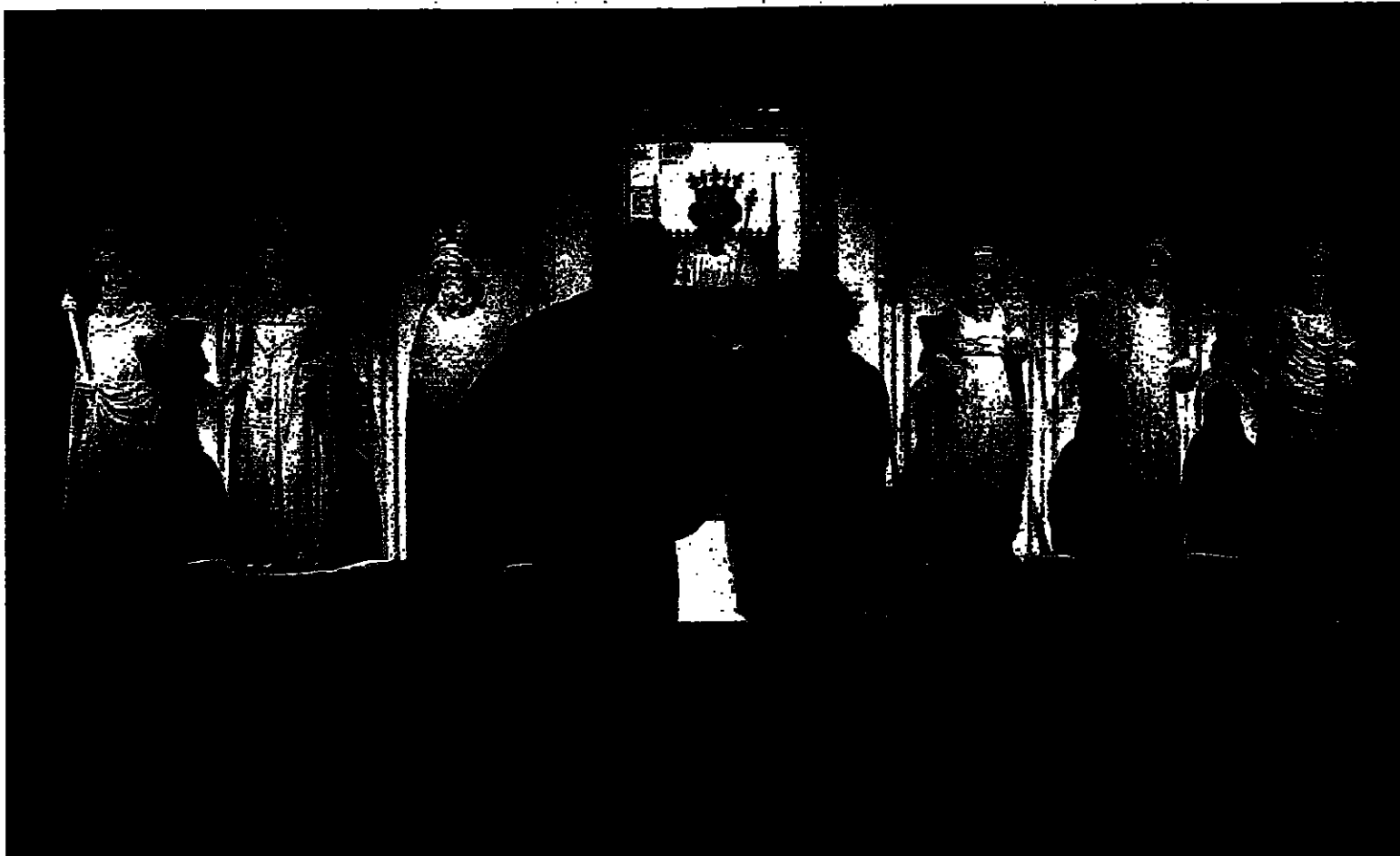
He said there must have been a time when he could and should have "abandoned the ship". But he added: "If I am being honest, I don't think I had the ability to leave him."

He had been brought up to believe that "the creed of loy-

alty is extremely important".

He dated the group's problems to October 1990, when the seeds of the collapse were sown by his father's decision to use Maxwell group assets to support the US side of the business, MCC, which was having financial difficulties. Kevin believed MCC should sort out its own problems and "I regret I did not have the stature or experience or ability to persuade him" to change his mind.

Questioned about whether he had made any money out of the losses of the company or taken anything for himself, he said "no". He also denied destroying documents or warning witnesses not to talk to investigators. The trial continues today.



Hall of kings: Visitors get a preview of the Westminster Kings exhibition, which opens today at the British Museum and runs until 14 January. Photograph: Geraint Lewis

## Charter flights ban smoking

GLENDA COOPER

Package tour customers from today will be guaranteed cloudless skies to Torremolinos or the Canaries. From now on 90 per cent of Britain's charter flights, which account for 10 million travellers every year, will have a smoking ban.

In the latest move to show the strength of consumer feeling against tobacco smokers, the Federation of Tour Operators (FTO) has persuaded major tour operators, such as Thomsons, Airtours and First Choice, to prohibit smoking on flights of up to six hours. This effectively stops anyone lighting up to any destination in Europe as well as places just outside, such as the Canaries, Egypt, Israel and Turkey.

The aircraft industry's decision to ban smoking follows the example set by trains, buses, coaches and the underground.

High profile cases such as that of Roy Castle, whose fatal lung cancer was said to have been caused by passive smoking, and Veronica Bland, who

won £15,000 compensation after claiming she had contracted her chronic bronchitis at work, have speeded the move towards non-smoking in all public areas.

Alan Flook, secretary general of the FTO, said that the move had come to fruition after four years work and had been driven by pressure from passengers. "There are more anti-smokers than there are smokers and it was clear more airlines were gradually banning it," he said. "We accepted that there were a lot more people who didn't like travelling with people who are smoking and you can't separate people as you can on a train."

It is expected that after 12 months there will be a review to see if smoking should be banned on all charter flights, regardless of distance.

Charter flights are following the example of scheduled flights. A smoking ban was introduced by British Airways in 1990 on a trial basis, and since then Virgin and United Airlines have also joined in.

### Places where you cannot smoke

**London Underground:** restrictions on smoking came in as early as 1971, but it was only after the King's Cross fire in 1987, where 31 died, that a total ban was imposed.

**Coaches:** National Express made them smoke-free in 1992.

**Transatlantic flights:** British Airways started trials of non-smoking transatlantic flights in 1990. Virgin and United Airlines banned smoking completely on such flights earlier this year.

**Trains:** BR increased accommodation for non-smokers in 1974; banned smoking on commuter trains into London in 1990.

**Buses:** London buses were made smoke-free in 1991.

**Cinemas:** Rank Leisure was the first major chain to provide smoke-free cinemas; 1987 Cannon-ABC bans smoking in 1987.

**Post Offices:** Made smoke-free in 1979.

**Hotels:** In 1984, Ash (Action on Smoking and Health) produced a guide to 244 hotels and guest houses that are smoke-free. By 1991, there were 1,500 hotels restaurants and pubs.

**Restaurants:** In 1993, a Mori survey said 51 per cent of people favour a complete ban on smoking in restaurants.

**Workplaces:** Ash estimates that 60 per cent of large firms now restrict smoking.

### Places where you can smoke

**Hospitals:** St Mary's in Portsmouth and Queen Alexandra in Cosham, are reintroducing designated smoking areas. Birmingham Maternity Hospital will have four designated areas.

**Peterborough:** Peterborough City Council has overturned a ban on smoking after losing £7,500 in lettings in seven months.

**Stafford:** The council has also voted against a smoking ban.

**McDonald's:** Two shops at Sidcup and Eltham in south-east London have reintroduced smoking areas.

**Taxis:** Forest, which advocates freedom of choice in smoking, says the majority of black taxi cabs are still "smoker-friendly".

**Pubs:** Most pubs still allow smoking in all areas.

**Japan:** No restrictions. It would be a brave airline operator who dared ban smoking in a country where on domestic flights the non-smoking section can consist of rows 58, 59 and 60.

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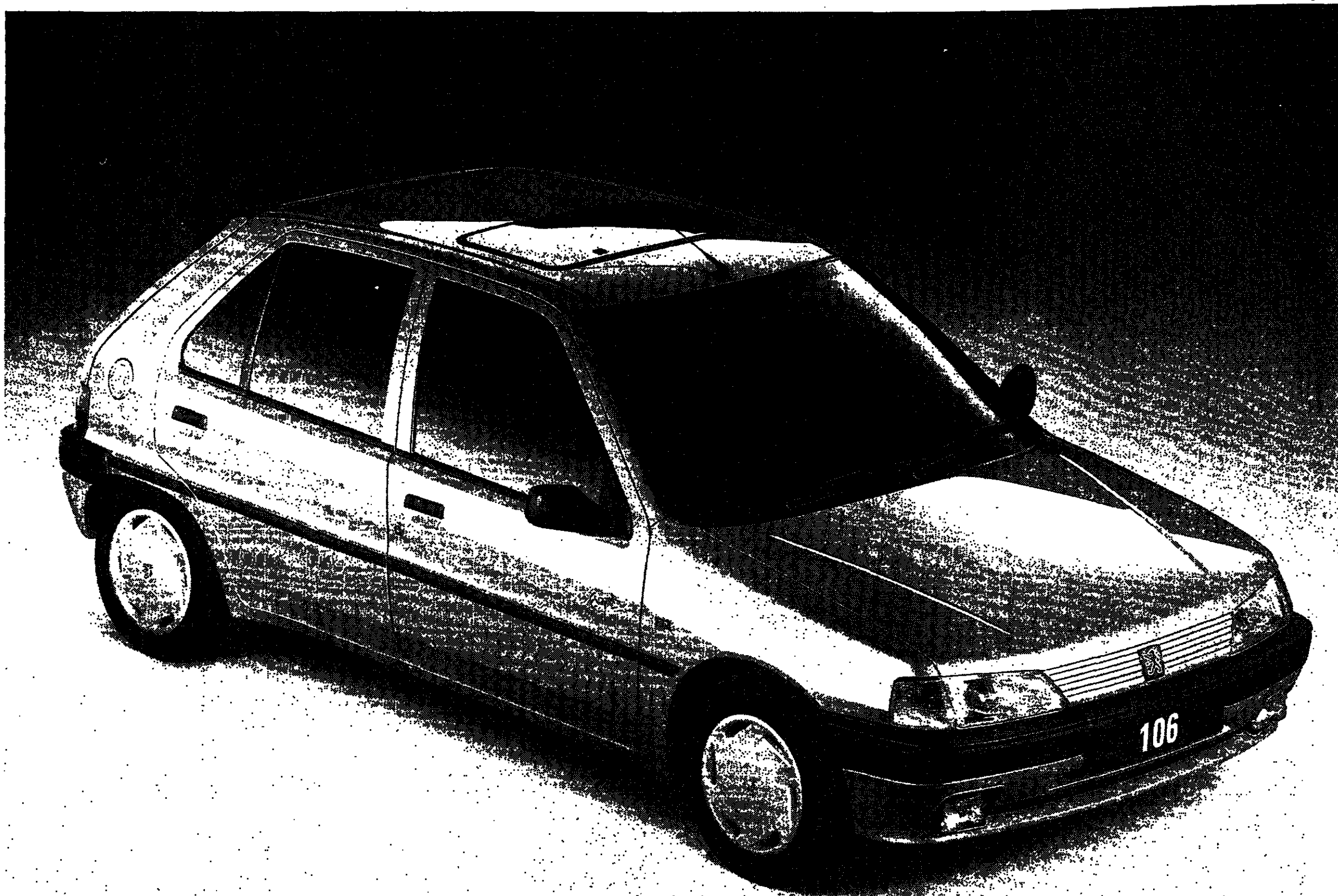
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## APR\* 9.9%

EXAMPLE: 106 ESCAPADE 1.0, 3 DOOR PETROL (LEVEL 1)	PASSPORT PRICE*	DEPOSIT (20%)	ONE PAYMENT ON SIGNING THE AGREEMENT	AMOUNT FINANCED	FINANCE CHARGES	TOTAL AMOUNT PAYABLE	24 MONTHLY PAYMENTS	GUARANTEED FUTURE VALUE**
2 YEAR PASSPORT	£7,493.00	£1,498.60	NIL	£5,994.40	£333.80	£6,328.20	£263.68	£3,856.00

\*All figures are based on 106 Escapade 1.0 3 door 4 speed petrol engine with an agreed mileage of 6,000 p.a. \*\*£25.00 fee to be payable on signing a sales agency agreement if you require this option. Further charges may be made subject to mileage, condition and if the vehicle is not returned on time. (Excess mileage charges range between 5p and 5.5p per mile as agreed at the time of purchase.) The sales agency option expires if the vehicle is not returned within 30 days from the end of your finance agreement. \*Passport price shown includes delivery, number plates and 12 months road fund licence, extended warranty and full AA cover.

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مركز العمل



# A question of sport: Wembley remains firm favourite to beat Manchester as shortlist of competitors is whittled down to two

## National stadium contest goes into extra time

MIKE ROWBOTTOM

The decision on where to build the proposed new national stadium was postponed yesterday. The Sports Council, which had been expected to name the winning bid, announced instead that it had narrowed down the choice to Wembley or Manchester, and that a further three-to-six months of deliberation would be needed.

Three other contenders - Birmingham, Sheffield and Bradford - were ruled out. But the steering group of leading sporting administrators which has been considering the five bids since 14 July needs further time to explore specific problems with the remaining two.

The Sports Council chairman, Rodney Walker, defended the postponement of the naming of the winner, which will be given up to £100m worth of lottery money.

"This is a decision for the next 60 years," he said. "It is a decision about how to spend tens of millions of lottery funding and we must be sure that public money is spent wisely."

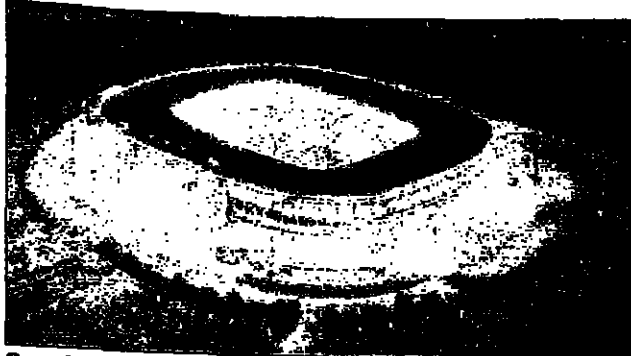
"We have deliberated long and hard. But now that Manchester and Wembley realise they are in a very serious bid situation it will be possible to start tough negotiations which we couldn't do before."

Wembley, regarded as the favourite given its history, existing infrastructure and location, still needs to convince the Sports Council on two major issues.

The crucial area is the operation of the stadium. Wembley's present owner, Wembley plc, plans to hand over the stadium to a trust in exchange for a contract to run events.

Mr Walker said that the detail of how such a trust would work alongside a management company needed to be clarified.

The second problem relates to the stadium's surroundings - at present its car parks are reached via a narrow road through an industrial estate. "A national stadium cannot exist in a concrete jungle," Mr Walker said. Assurances will be sought from Brent Council on plans to



Grand designs: How Wembley will look if it wins (above), and Manchester's proposed stadium (below)



improve access from the North Circular Road.

Manchester, which offers a cleared site with planning permission in the city centre, and funding of up to £47m, also has to satisfy the Sports Council over the operation of its stadium. There is, too, concern about transport, especially over its strong emphasis on the use of private cars.

Howard Bernstein, deputy chief executive of Manchester City Council, said the bid would push for the expansion of the current metro link between the stadium site and the city centre.

Mr Bernstein was due to leave yesterday for Bermuda, where the Commonwealth Games Council is due on Friday to rubber-stamp Manchester's hosting of the 2002 Games.

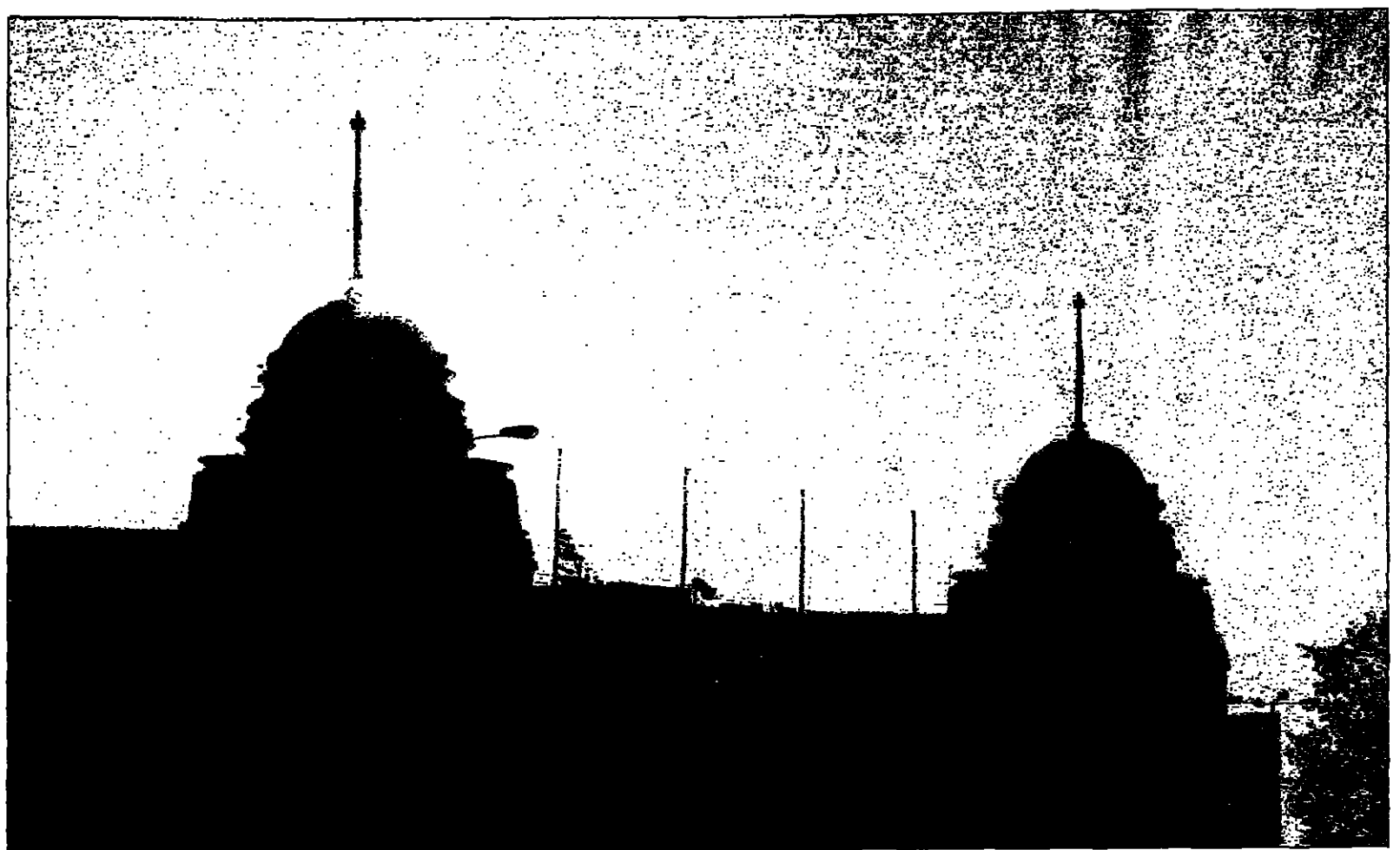
Yesterday's announcement left Manchester in a no-lose position. If they do not win the national stadium, the Sports Council is committed to help fund the 2002 Games. However, Mr Bernstein said: "We are absolutely confident we can convince the Sports Council of our case."

Wembley believes that it is "the only logical choice". A spokesman said: "We would have preferred a clear-cut decision but we are confident our strengths will be recognised in the coming few months."

Both parties will seek meetings with the rugby, football and athletics bodies represented on the steering group as to how exactly they would stage events.

"The real talking starts now," said Graham Kelly, chief executive of the Football Association and a member of the 10-man steering group. The FA has a contract with Wembley until 2002 to stage major matches such as England internationals and the FA Cup final, but Mr Kelly said a future deal with the winning stadium would have to be more flexible.

Bradford's proposal of a covered dome was rejected because its predominant use would be as an entertainment centre. Sheffield went outside the remit of one stadium by proposing separate sites for athletics and field sports, while Birmingham's bid was undermined by its sitting on green-belt land.



Front runner: Although Wembley stadium is favourite to win the bid, its owners still have to win Sports Council officials over on two major issues

## Making a profit is the name of the game

A walk down Wembley Way on any day other than a cup final, or when a pop concert is being staged, is a lonely one. There are no hot-dog stands, and no vendors of scarves, hats, drinks or programmes. Quite simply, no money is changing hands.

Making a profit from a stadium complex the size of Wembley is as difficult a management task as they come, particularly in the leisure industry which thrives on mass audiences. Putting bottoms on seats is the name of the game.

The future can only be difficult

### Analysis

For the first time in its 72-year history, the 68-acre home of English football would have a serious business competitor, and the nostalgia of the 1948 Olympics and 1966 World Cup Final might not be enough to see it through another 72 years.

Wembley has already been as close to going to the financial

wall as is conceivably possible. Receivers would have been running the company today but for a recent refinancing, involving banks exchanging buckets of debt for mountains of share certificates.

By far the majority of Wembley's financial problems stemmed from a crazy acquisition spending spree in the 1980s. If it moved, Wembley bought it - from film distribution companies, night-clubs, tent-hire firms, corporate hospitality services, through to greyhound tracks either side of the Atlantic and bingo halls.

The acquisitive money, be it cash or in share form, was rolled out at an alarming rate. The problem was that the recession arrived and the money from customers stopped rolling in. The Wembley company lost £65.7m last year, equivalent to £821.25 for each of the 80,000 seats in the stadium.

Sir Brian Wolfson, who presided over the 1980s spending spree, has left the group, and been replaced as chairman by Claes Hultman, the Swedish head of the process control company, Eurotherm.

Much of the hard work, such

as the sale of unprofitable and unnecessary assets and the refinancing, was completed before Mr Hultman took the helm. His job now is to rejuvenate a stadium complex that is lost in a time warp, out of touch with the needs and demands of the Nineties and, more to the point, the 21st-century consumer.

Wembley needs to be razed and rebuilt. It is just not possible to make the changes necessary within the confines of the current building structure.

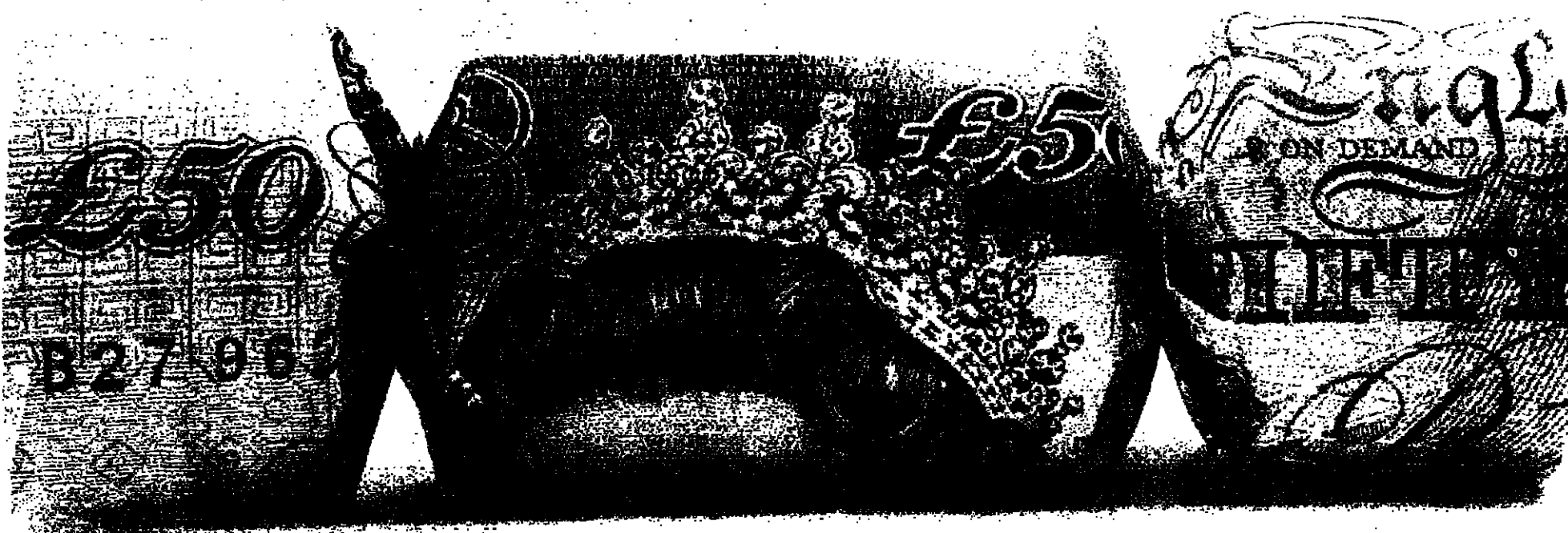
John Shepherd

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## news

# Education debate: Poor school teaching leaves undergraduates struggling as three-year-old brings intellectual approach to tabloid

## University maths students 'lack fundamental skills'

JUDITH JUDD  
Education Editor

Many university maths and science students lack basic mathematical skills because of bad teaching in schools, according to a report published yesterday.

A report by eminent mathematicians paints an alarming picture of declining maths standards over the past decade and challenges the official view that standards in public exams have been maintained.

It says students on university maths courses cannot carry out basic arithmetical and algebraic calculations and their ability to solve problems is getting worse. They have little idea that maths requires precision.

Modern approaches to teaching maths and the national curriculum's failure to define what should be taught are to blame, says the report from the London Mathematical Society, the Institute of Mathematics and its Applications and the Royal Statistical Society.

A member of the working party, Dr Tony Gardner, said:

"The existing curriculum was the result of an educational philosophy that said if some children found a subject hard it should be made easier for all."

"The result is that children don't do algebra or ratios or proofs any more. And when they get to university it is a bit

late to start." The report says teachers are not to blame but that school inspectors have encouraged the decline in standards by suggesting that teachers should put less emphasis on basic skills and more on investigation and problem-solving.

The working group, chaired by Professor Geoffrey Howson, is convinced maths standards at GCSE have fallen. It says the mathematical knowledge needed to obtain top marks in GCSE does not match that needed to get a good grade in the old O-level additional maths.

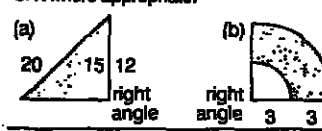
The same was true at A-level. A decade ago 10 per cent of candidates got grade A compared with 25 per cent last year. Equally worrying was the proliferation of different maths syllabuses at A-level.

The group says the slide in standards has been accelerated by the Government's efforts to introduce market forces to education. It says it has "compelling evidence" that schools are moving their exam entries to what seem to be less demanding boards. It says standards are slipping as the boards compete to keep market shares, a charge denied by the boards.

The mathematicians call for a review of the maths curriculum and a government standing committee to be set up to examine maths education.

### What students should know at 19

Question: Calculate the areas shaded in the diagrams, leaving your answer in terms of  $\pi$  where appropriate.



What 14-16 year olds can't do

Which of these divisions has a whole number answer?

(a)  $1234 \div 5$  (b)  $123456 \div 7$  (c)  $12345678 \div 9$

What 12-13 year olds can't do

What is the units digit of the product of 12345678 and 687?

(a) 2 (b) 3 (c) 7 (d) 9 (e) not sure without calculator

Correct Ans:

(a) 42

(b)  $\frac{11}{4}$

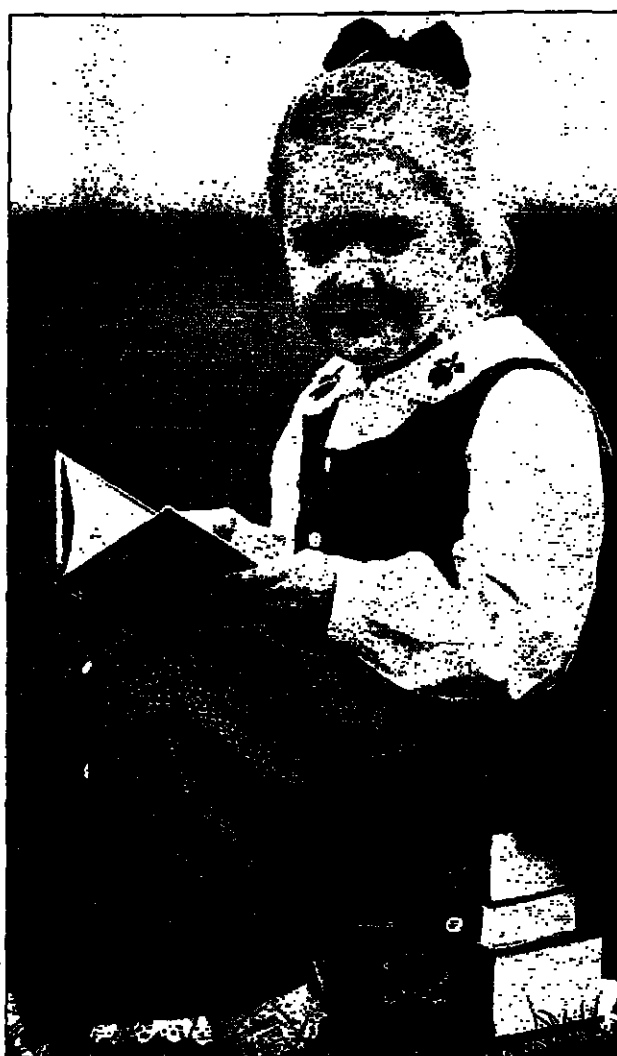
(c) 7

(d) 3

(e) 9

(f) 2

(g) 4



Brain child: Chantelle Coleman, who has an IQ of 152

## Child star takes hot seat at 'Sun'

IAN MACKINNON

It has always been said that the *Sun* newspaper can be grasped by those with a reading age of nine. Yesterday, a three-year-old girl took the editor's chair.

But not just any three-year-old. This was Chantelle Coleman, shortly to be Mensa's youngest member, who with an IQ of 152 ranks higher than Albert Einstein.

At the *Sun*'s headquarters in Wapping, east London, Chantelle's progress at Britain's largest-selling daily was being kept secret. But presumably the precocious girl from Barry, South Glamorgan, was able to find time to read a few of the six books she reads daily between editing duties, as well as wowing the assembled reporters with a few of the choice Latin phrases she likes to recite.

At 10 months, Chantelle was walking confidently and at a year she could talk, putting together long sentences.

By 28 months her mother, Margaret Rose, 29, had taught her the phonetic alphabet. She said: "I was brushing my teeth and Chantelle read out C-O-L-

G-A-T-E and said: 'Does that spell toothpaste mummy?' I explained what it said and she looked at a bottle on the bath and read out the word shampoo. I was staggered."

Two months later, when Chantelle arrived home after her first day at nursery school she amazed her parents by reciting her classmates' names in alphabetical order.

It was then the couple began to realise their daughter was extremely bright.

"I bought her a big Fisher Price clock to teach her the time," said her father Alan, 28, an RAF technician. "I sat down with her one morning and in an hour she'd grasped it. The toy cost me £15 and it was a waste of money, she never needed to use it again and we had to buy her a watch instead."

At three years and 10 months she can subtract fractions, count backwards from 1,000 and identify and say numbers running into billions.

Her IQ will make her the youngest member of Mensa by six days, her nearest rival being Rhianon Llinington-Payne, who has an IQ of 155.

## Two jailed over £1m NHS fraud

A dishonest doctor and a corrupt chemist were jailed yesterday in a landmark court case believed to involve bogus National Health Service prescriptions worth £1m.

Timothy Whitefield, 49, a family doctor, was sentenced to three years' imprisonment and Bryan Samson, 53, to two years at Leeds crown court after the judge said they milked the health service out of greed.

Judge Norman Jones QC told them: "Both of you have let your professions down and disgracefully so. Both of you stand before me as ruined men. These actions were motivated entirely by greed... you treated the NHS as a milch cow - you milked it, both of you, ruthlessly."

The court heard that Samson and the GP were being dealt with for a £171,800 fraud, but it was also told that the chemist's company, Waycare, was being sued for £1m by the Leeds Family Health Service Authority. It is believed to be the first sentencing for a doctor-chemist prescription fraud - a crime believed to cost the country £30m a year.

Gerry Malone, the Minister for Health said yesterday that the total money lost nationally - 10 per cent of prescription revenue - could fund 7,000 hip re-

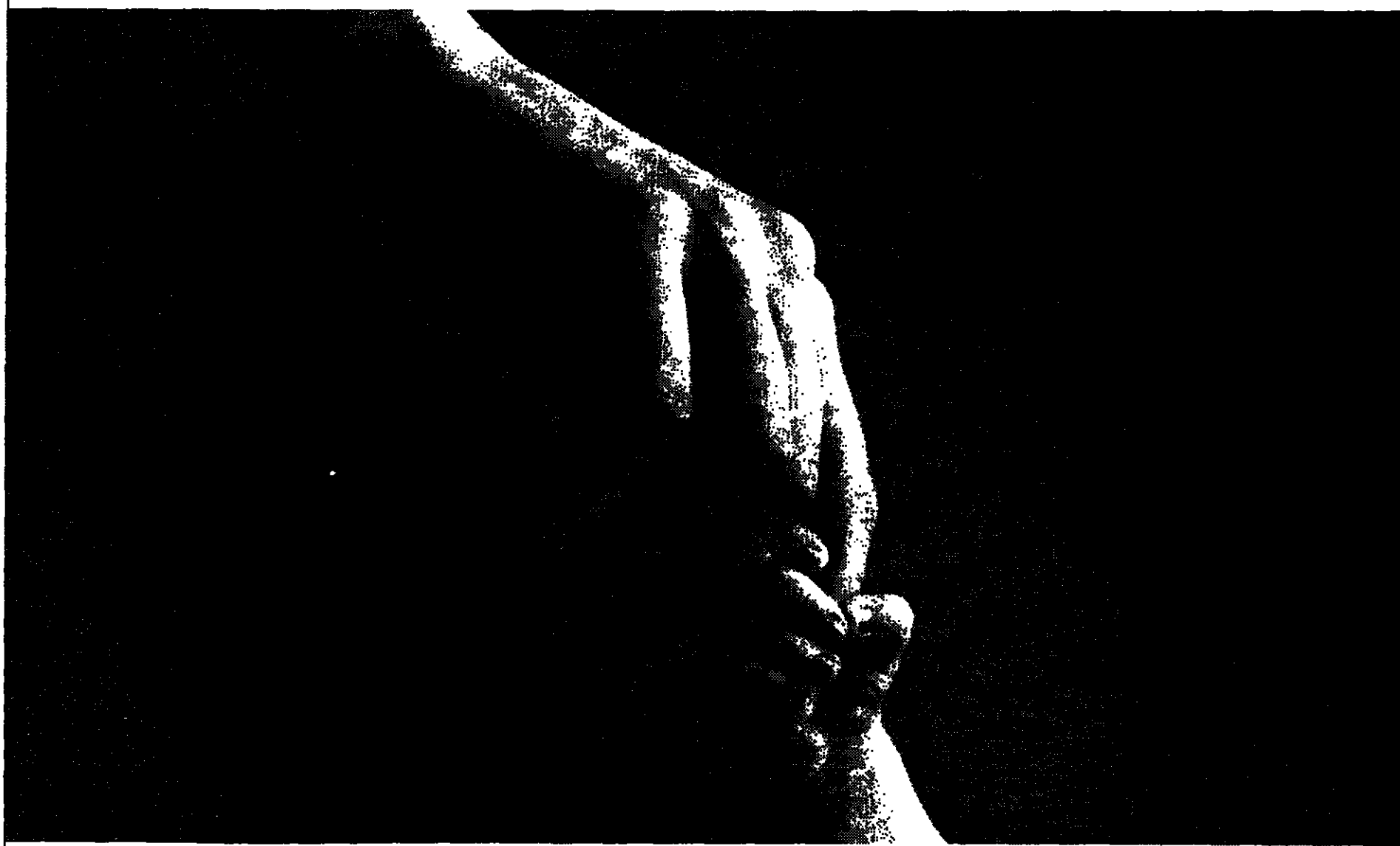
placements, 20,000 cataract operations, or 3,000 heart valve operations. Mr Malone said a government clampdown on such frauds had introduced new style prescription forms "and it is our intention to stop frauds like this".

Whitefield, from Roundhay, Leeds, was found guilty at an earlier hearing of conspiracy to defraud the city's Family Health Service Authority between October 1989 and May 1990. Samson, who lives in Moor Monkton, near York, had admitted the offence.

The jury heard that while practising at Armley Health Centre in Church Road, Leeds, Whitefield wrote out hundreds of fake prescriptions for Samson, who never dispensed the drugs. But the Leeds chemist, whose pharmacy was just yards from the doctor's surgery, claimed back cash for the medicine from the FHSA. After paying one-third in tax he split the balance with Whitefield.

The case against Whitefield and Samson took almost five years to come to court. Suspicion of fraud by Samson was aroused by the massive number of forms he was processing - nearly three times the national average. The court heard that Samson and Whitefield spent the money on high living.

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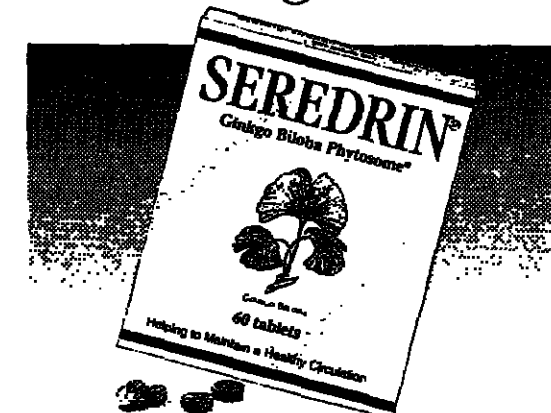


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Handwritten text in Arabic script: "هذا هو المال"



# Watchdog condemns rail sell-off 'pantomime'

CHRISTIAN WOLMAR  
Transport Correspondent

It was supposed to be a quiet departure into oblivion but the old soldier did not play the game. Instead, Major General Lennox Napier, who yesterday left his job as chairman of the rail watchdog, the Central Rail Users' Consultative Council, caused a political furor with his fiercest attack yet on rail privatisation, provoking Sir George Young, the Secretary of State for Transport, into an angry response.

His criticisms came as the country's leading train manufacturer announced further cuts because of the dearth of orders from British Rail and as figures revealed that trains on main lines were running slower than before the privatisation process started.

Maj-Gen Napier likened the rail sell-off to a pantomime. He said: "So I end rather looking at a pantomime. Pantomimes should have a happy ending. At the moment there isn't a Prince Charming called finance or investment yet in the script."

He cited the Commons transport committee which said that the railways would cost an extra £700m in subsidy a year. While he was not opposed to rail privatisation, he said: "This Government was always going to introduce rail privatisation but if they could go back in time I think they would go about it in a different way. Privatisation could work, but it's just a matter of whether it will work better for passengers. There is a great deal of uncertainty around. There is no clear indication that we are going to have a high level of sustained investment in the railways."

Maj-Gen Napier said there was insufficient investment in

the railways to ensure that even present levels of services and standards were maintained.

Sir George said: "Far from undermining the railways, rail privatisation offers the opportunity for stronger investment and a better service for passengers which the Major General himself has been campaigning for over the last 10 years."

A rail industry source suggested that the general's recent outspokenness was causing problems in finding a successor. "They thought Lennox would be a poodle but he has stirred it up. It's difficult to see how they can find anyone to replace him."

In further bad news for privatisation, ABB Transportation announced 123 job losses because of lack of orders and the need to cut costs.

A spokeswoman said every effort would be made to seek volunteers but the company could not rule out compulsory redundancies.

An analysis by Barry Doe, a rail industry consultant, for the BBC's *Here and Now*, found that BR's InterCity services are getting slower. Four in five InterCity journeys take longer than they did in 1989, according to Mr Doe who believes it is the first time in the history of the railways that trains have gone slower than in the past.

But he denied that journey times were being padded out to avoid compensation being paid out under the Passenger's Charter; the longer journeys were simply to improve reliability of arrival times.

A former train crew manager, David Smith, told the programme: "The motive is to enable the train operating companies to massage their statistics to show their performance in a better light."

## Breast cancer: Coalition launched to lobby for increase in research spending



Lobby group: Women at the launch of the UK Breast Cancer Coalition at the House of Commons yesterday

Photograph: John Lawrence

## Women unite in anger to fight killer disease

LIZ HUNT  
Health Editor

Hundreds of women in 11 cities joined forces yesterday to launch the UK Breast Cancer Coalition which aims to establish a national strategy to conquer the disease which kills 300 women every week.

The coalition is demanding increased government spending on breast cancer research, claiming that just £3m will be spent this year compared with £22bn on defence.

Nancy Roberts, chairwoman of the coalition and radio personality, said: "The mood in the UK is changing. Women are angry. Angry that we cannot trust the health system to provide us with quality care, angry that so little is being done to discover the causes of breast cancer, and angry at the lack of psycho-social support and aftercare for those of us stricken with this baffling and terrifying disease."

Ms Roberts, a breast cancer sufferer, said the coalition would unite women across

Britain, ending the isolation many feel. The group is modelled on the American National Breast Cancer Coalition which it says has increased US government spending on research from \$90m (£60m) annually to \$600m (£400m).

The launch follows several reports calling for a radical overhaul of breast cancer services here, the most influential of which was produced by the Commons Health Select Committee in July. The committee said the UK's poor survival

rates for the disease - among the worst in the world - are due in part to inadequate treatment. It estimated that 4,000 unnecessary deaths could be prevented each year if women were treated in specialist units by multi-disciplinary teams of breast experts, from radiologists to nurses.

The coalition's aims are access for all women to state-of-the-art treatment; a higher priority to be given to causes, prevention and quality of life issues; and more say for women

in decisions about the disease. The initiative has won support from medical and research organisations, cancer charities, women's and environmental groups, MPs from every party and a number of celebrities who were present at the London launch at the House of Commons yesterday, the last day of Breast Cancer Awareness month. Simultaneous launches took place in Glasgow, Belfast, Cardiff, Liverpool, Bristol, Norwich, Newcastle, Carlisle, Leeds and Portsmouth.

## Fish diet 'cuts risk of heart attacks'

LIZ HUNT

Just one serving a week of fatty fish such as fresh salmon, tuna or cod, can reduce the risk of cardiac arrest by up to 70 per cent, according to American research.

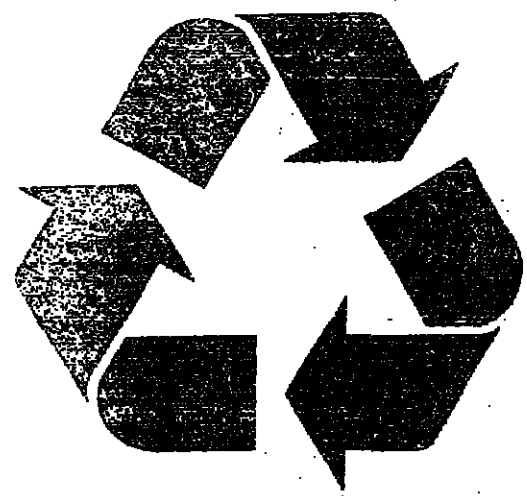
Scientists from the University of Washington in Seattle have assessed the protective benefits to the heart of a type of fatty acid, which is found primarily in seafood, by analysing the diets of 827 people aged 34 to 74. They found that an intake of 5.5 grams per month of the n-3 fatty acids, as they are known, was associated with a 50 per cent reduction in the risk of cardiac arrest - changes in the rhythm of the heart beat which can result in a heart attack.

An 84g (3oz) serving of cooked fresh salmon contains 1.49g of the fatty acid, and four servings a month would be enough to reap the benefits for the heart, according to a report in the *Journal of the American Medical Association*. One serving of cod contains 0.23g of n-3 fatty acids, and one serving of albacore tuna contains 0.74g.

Dr David Siscovick and his team in Seattle also analysed the level of the n-3 fatty acids in the blood, where they are found in blood cell membranes. They are believed to reduce the clumping of blood cells, and the risk of heart spasms. The researchers found that small increases in the percentage of the fatty acids substantially lowered the risk of a heart attack.

The report says "... a red blood cell n-3 polyunsaturated fatty acid level of 4.3 per cent of total fatty acids was associated with a 50 per cent reduction in the risk of primary cardiac arrest", while a level of 5 per cent was associated with a 70 per cent reduction.

A diet rich in seafood is associated with good health. In Europe, Spanish adults eat the most fish - between 60-90g a day - and deaths from heart disease for men are three times fewer than in England where men eat under 40g of fish a day.



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# Cabinet to rule on education budget

COLIN BROWN and JOHN RENTOUL

The Prime Minister is expected to be asked to intervene by Gillian Shephard at the meeting of the Cabinet tomorrow to resolve the dispute with the Treasury over her bid for more spending for education.

The Secretary of State for Education is expected to seek John Major's backing at the Cabinet to break the deadlock with the Treasury over her demands for higher spending.

The Prime Minister gave education the highest priority in his Conservative Party conference speech. The Treasury has been resisting her demands for a higher budget to compensate authorities for cuts last year, which led to teachers being threatened with redundancy.

The Cabinet EDX committee on public expenditure, chaired by the Chancellor, Kenneth Clarke, has been holding daily meetings to resolve the dispute over the education budget and the bid for higher spending on the health budget by Stephen Dorrell, the Secretary of State for Health.

Senior Tory MPs believe the Chancellor will be able to offer

£6bn in tax cuts in the Budget, financed by £3bn cuts in spending and £3bn from the contingency reserve. The meeting of the Cabinet is seen as crucial for the Tory demands for cuts in taxes and there could be a meeting of the EDX next Monday to settle the spending row.

There is going to be a shoot-out at the Cabinet. They realise they are in the last chance saloon," one senior Tory backbencher said. The cuts will include slashing capital spending, including the road programme and hospitals. Private finance will be expanded to fill the gap. Peter Lilley, the Secretary of State for Social Security, is fighting William Waldegrave, the Chief Secretary to the Treasury, over demands for deeper cuts, but social security savings are likely to include ending the lone parent's allowance for new claimants, which could require legislation.

Meanwhile Gordon Brown, the shadow Chancellor, launches the first stage of Labour's three-part pre-Budget strike this morning, demanding a national effort to increase investment to halt Britain's slide down the "world prosperity league". In a full-page press advertisement the party claims the UK has "slumped" from 13th to 18th in the league table of national income per head since 1979. "The Tories will settle for 18th best. New Labour will not," it declares.

Mr Brown will set out the party's plans for tax incentives for investment at a breakfast for 50 business leaders at the Park Lane Hilton hotel today. "We need to equip Britain for the future by securing investment in industry, infrastructure and people," he is expected to say.

He intends to sidestep the question of Labour's attitude to Tory tax cuts. "The real issue for this Budget is not a penny or two off income tax, but how government can best sustain the recovery by encouraging the higher levels of investment our economy needs."

Mr Brown will firm up a proposal for a new, lower rate of Capital Gains Tax for long-term investment and to float the idea of enhanced capital allowances for investment in excess of the previous year's.

He is expected to follow up next week with "new" plans to tackle youth and long-term unemployment paid for by a windfall levy on privatised utilities.

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Holding out: Gillian Shephard is seeking John Major's backing for more education spending Photograph: Brian Harris

## Lords tightens rules on banqueting

The House of Lords has tightened up its rules over banqueting for companies in the Lords, following claims that some peers charged £1,000 to book rooms for big business, writes Colin Brown.

A Channel 4 Dispatches programme to be broadcast tonight as peers debate moves to tighten up disclosure rules alleges a lobbyist was asked by a peer to pay for booking the Cholmondeley Room for a reception for clients. Peers are routinely paid retainers of £5,000 or more by lobby companies.

Lord Peston, a Labour peer and chairman of the refreshment sub-committee of the Lords, said new rules had been put into effect within recent weeks. The rules will not prevent peers with a financial interest from booking banqueting rooms, but would bar any peer who admits they are paid for booking the room. The allegations will heighten concern that the Lords has escaped proper scrutiny while the Nolan Committee has put the spotlight on the Commons.

Peers today will debate proposals by a committee of peers under Lord Griffiths to put their own house in order before the Nolan Committee turns its attention to the Lords. The Griffiths report recommended that peers for the first time should have a register of their interest in lobby companies.

But Lord Richard, an Opposition spokesman, will call for the register to require peers, like MPs, to declare their directorships, land holdings, and paid Parliamentary work.

Some Tory peers are opposed to the register and may seek to table amendments, when the issue is debated again. Dispatches will tonight allege that some senior Tory peers have failed to declare their interests in debates on the environment, waste management

### Today's business

Commons: (10am) Backbench debates: Police security industry. Manufacturing industry. Proposed motorway service area at Wey. Firework safety. Betting tax and horse racing. (2.30pm) Trade and industry questions: Gas Bill. Lords amendment. Motion to carry over the Channel Tunnel Rail Link Bill to next session. Lords: Debate on Procedure Committee and Declaration and Registration of interests sub-committee reports. Medical (Professional Performance) Bill, Third Reading.

# Major takes high ground against Bosnia assault

John Major yesterday angrily brushed aside a claim that the British government acquiesced in a UN abandonment of the Muslim enclave of Srebrenica, leaving 8,000 people to die at the hands of Bosnian Serbs.

Earlier this week the Independent revealed that Britain stayed silent at a closed meeting in New York when Lieutenant-General Bernard Janvier, the commander of all UN forces in former Yugoslavia, told diplomats to quit the safe areas.

Paddy Ashdown, the Liberal Democrat leader, provoked the Prime Minister's ire at Question Time by asking if the charge was correct. He asked Mr Major to consider three dates: "On 11 July Srebrenica fell and 8,000 young men were taken away and massacred. On 31 May I asked the then defence

secretary [Malcolm Rifkind] for an assurance that the policy of the defence of Srebrenica had not changed and he gave me that assurance. "It is now revealed, or

claimed, that on 24 May with the full acquiescence of the British government, the UN decided to abandon Srebrenica to its fate. Is that correct?"

A regular visitor to Bosnia, Mr Ashdown called for more ro-

bast action from the start of the crisis. His Question Time warnings of "too little, too late" have always touched a raw spot with Mr Major, but his suggestion that the Government turned its back on the enclave got a particularly bitter response.

"I think the Right Honourable Gentleman just occasionally might do the British forces and the British government the credit of acknowledging what they have done. What he is saying is not correct. He has been wrong throughout the whole of the exercise. Time after time, he has denigrated what the British government have done and what British forces have done," the Prime Minister said. He was plain wrong in alleging Mr Ashdown has criticised the forces, but quite deliberately made the

government-forces link. "There are thousands of people alive today in Bosnia because of what was done by the British government and British forces."

Mr Ashdown later wrote to the Prime Minister, pressing him again on the Independent's report. If it was correct, he asked, how did Mr Major explain his government's actions in this "terrible matter"?

Mr Major had come to the House determined to stamp on Labour's charge that the Conservative Party has lurched to the right. Tony Blair gave him enough of an opening with a call to "stop pandering to the right wing" and keep the railways as a public service.

The Prime Minister said if Mr Blair thought bringing more

choice to parents and opportunity to children was a lurch to the right, the country would not agree. Nor was spending more on patients' health, dealing with asylum abuses or standing up for Britain in Europe.

"The Labour leader knows that the centre-right of politics is our ground and there is no way a squatter like him will be able to rest on it. He may regard himself as the Trojan Horse of socialism, but he will find it's our land on which he is parking and there is no room for him."

Speaker Betty Boothroyd issued a sharp reminder to Tory backbenchers that the 15 minutes of Questions to Prime Minister is for exactly that - ie not about greasy invites to knock the Opposition. After Mr Major had been asked by loyalists to twist the knife in

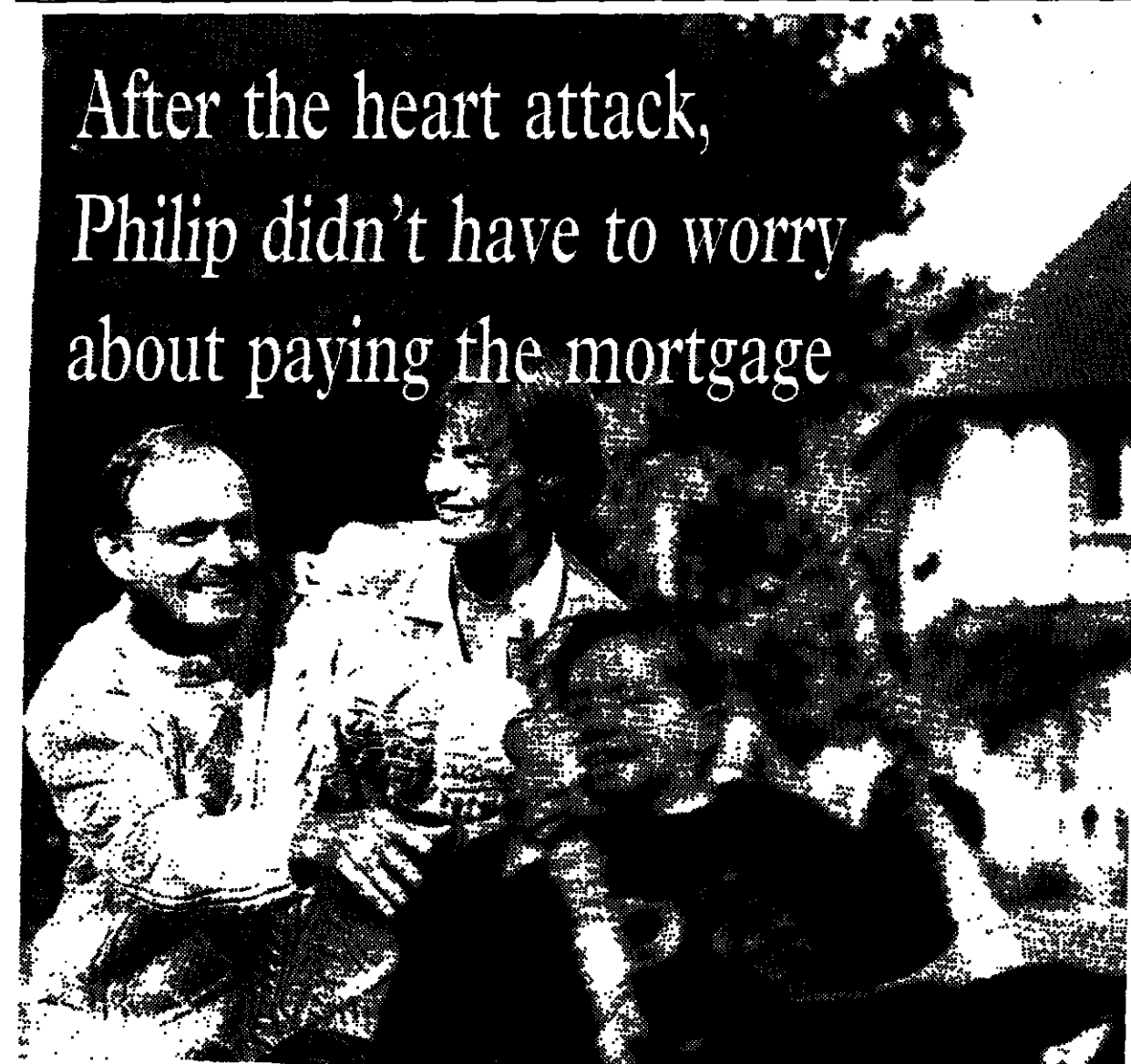
Labour's agonies over grant-maintained schools, all-women shortlists and, inevitably, cannabis, Graham Allen, MP for Nottingham North, asked Miss Boothroyd to rule on the "abuse" of Question Time.

He quoted Erskine May, the Commons rule book, and said: "The Prime Minister is increasingly dodging legitimate questions of this House and playing dubious devices from the Whips Office to ensure that questions are addressed to the Leader of the Opposition - which only the Prime Minister then can answer."

Miss Boothroyd pointed out that she had just cautioned one Tory MP - Ann Winterton attacking all-women shortlists for Labour parliamentary candidates. "Cabinet ministers, all min-

isters, are responsible to this House for the workings of the Government and of their department - not for the attitude of the Opposition or any of the minority parties," she said, no doubt more in hope than expectation of any change in MPs' tactics.

The Government acted last night to reverse a defeat inflicted by peers on its package to curb discrimination against disabled people. The Lords voted in June to widen a definition in the Disability Discrimination Bill to cover people like asthma sufferers and those with mild cerebral palsy. The legislation makes it unlawful to discriminate against the disabled in employment and in the provision of goods, facilities and services, but falls well short of the demands of campaigners for disabled people's rights.



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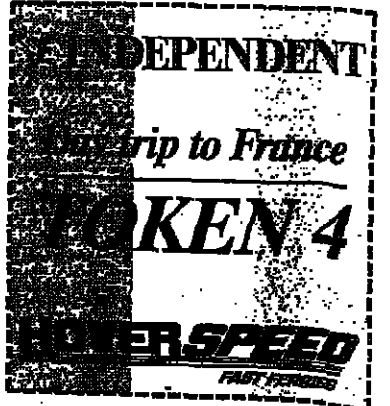
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Quebec says 'no': Chrétien puts brave face on narrow referendum result but nothing is settled and clashes continue

# Separatist surge leaves Canada wounded

HUGH WINSOR  
Ottawa

Canada has survived as a unified country by a margin so slim it would fit into a football stadium. But the close vote revealed a surge in separatist support in Quebec that poses a serious problem for the Prime Minister, Jean Chrétien and his Liberal Government in Ottawa.

When the final votes were tallied late on Monday evening, there were just 50,000 votes between the "no" side at 50.6 per cent of the almost 5 million votes cast, compared with 49.4 per cent for the separatists.

But the demographics of the electorate, in which the English-speaking population, immigrants and native people vote massively for remaining in Canada, mean that a clear majority of francophones voted for separatism.

Evidence that the linguistic and cultural tensions are going to increase because of the nationalists' frustration surfaced within hours. Even if at least a quarter of the people who voted for the separatists did not want independence, the outcome means there is a strong desire for a change in Quebec's relationship to the rest of the Canadian federation.

Many of those francophone voters responded to an appeal by Lucien Bouchard, the leader of the Bloc Québécois, a separatist party in the federal parliament, to give him a strong bargaining card to play against English Canada.

The vote amounts to a repudiation of the approach taken by the Prime Minister, who had argued the structure had protected French language and culture and had allowed Quebecers to flourish.

Only in the last week of the referendum campaign as it appeared the separatists could

win. was Mr Chrétien forced to change his position, promising at a major rally in Montreal that all avenues of change would be open to Quebecers if they voted to stay within Canada, including constitutional changes to recognise Quebec as a distinct society and possibly giving it a special legal status that would not be shared with the other nine provinces.

Now Mr Chrétien has to deliver some form of change quickly because the separatists have said they will try to have another referendum to capitalise on their momentum.

"We will not wait another 15 years," the Quebec Premier, Jacques Parizeau, told disappointed supporters, a reference to the last referendum in 1980. "We lost by a tiny margin. What to do? Well you roll up your sleeves and begin over again."

People in Quebec and in the rest of Canada on both sides of the issue had hoped the result would be more decisive, so that they could get on with other, mainly economic challenges. But Quebec now seems destined to move to the top of the federal government's agenda.

Mr Chrétien and his senior cabinet colleagues are despondent because they know the potential pitfalls of attempting to rewrite the constitution. Two attempts to ratify constitutional amendments over the past five years have failed because of opposition from some of the other provincial governments in the anglophone part of the country with the result that separatist support has increased.

These previous failures played a part in tarnishing the reputation of former prime minister Brian Mulroney and the devastation of the federal Conservative Party that was reduced to two seats in the 295-seat House of Commons in the last election.



Yes and no: A 'yes' supporter clashing with the Montreal riot police after the Quebec vote went narrowly to the 'noes' Photograph: Moe Doinov/AP

## Province more divided than ever before

DAVID USBORNE  
Montreal

Quebec emerged yesterday from the referendum still joined to the rest of Canada but more divided within itself than ever before, and badly scarred by pitched fighting on the streets of Montreal.

With the final tally giving the tiniest of margins to the "no" camp, separatist leaders vowed to continue the fight, implying that Canada's constitutional nightmare is far from over.

There were doubts, also, about the future of the province's firebrand Premier, Jacques Parizeau, who shocked some of his own followers by blaming big business and ethnic minorities for blocking his bid to take Quebec out of the federation.

The relaying of the final result on the jumbo projection screen in the Palais des Congrès was too much for some "oui" supporters, who crumpled in tears. It had seemed that the returns were driving towards a sovereigntist victory and turned in favour of the federalists only after results started coming in from the island of Montreal itself, which voted very heavily against separation.

Some ignored the appeals for calm, responding instead to the rhetoric of Mr Parizeau. Supporters of both camps clashed until the early hours. Some Montreal shops were looted and police reported an arson attack against the offices of Daniel Johnson, the leader of the Quebec opposition.

Speaking to thousands of

tearful supporters of the "oui" campaign in Montreal's Palais des Congrès, Mr Parizeau characterised the result in inflammatory terms of "us and them" - French-speakers and the rest. His remarks appeared to destroy in a stroke the progress made in recent years to transform the Quebec secessionist movement, that was founded thirty years ago by René Lévesque, from a narrow nationalist movement into a broad-based political force.

"We'll stop talking about the francophones of Quebec. We'll talk about us," Mr Parizeau declared. And in words that were still reverberating across the province and all of Canada yesterday, he went on: "We are beaten, it's true. But by what? Money and the ethnic vote."

The Premier was emboldened in defeat by the fact that, for the first time, a majority of french-speakers voted in favour of separation. In the 1980 Quebec referendum, the "no" side won by 60 per cent.

Both Mr Parizeau and Lucien Bouchard, the leader of the opposition in the federal parliament in Ottawa and head of the Bloc Québécois party, promised to continue the fight for independence. Saying it was time to "roll up the sleeves" to start again, Mr Parizeau said: "We were so close to a country. It's delayed a little - not a long time, not a long time. We won't wait 15 years next time."

But Mr Bouchard, who has risen to eclipse Mr Parizeau as the inspirational leader of the secession forces, avoided all

bitterness in a statesmanlike appeal for calm and acceptance of the democratic process. But he admitted to a packed hall: "To see it escape our grasp is hard to bear."

Speculation grew yesterday that Mr Parizeau may be forced soon to step down as head of the ruling Parti Québécois in Quebec, to make way for the more moderate Mr Bouchard. This could help the flame of separation to burn on in the province, although it would probably sound a death knell for the Bloc Québécois in Ottawa.

For all the promises of a new push for sovereignty, current laws bar the Quebec government from calling another referendum within its current mandate, which has another four years to run.

Jaasmire Polifort, a Haitian community leader, called Mr Parizeau's comment "very dangerous". She said: "You have to remember that there are some people out there who don't like ethnic minorities."

Rabbi Reuben Poupko, president of the Rabbinical Council of Montreal, said the speech was "replete with racism and crass demagoguery. His speech reveals that he does not understand that he is Premier of all Quebecers."

Throughout, Mr Parizeau characterised Quebecers in terms of "us and them", the French-speakers and the non-French-speakers, and even referred repeatedly to the need for revenge.

"This is very offensive," said Armando Barqueiro, editor of A Voz, a Portuguese-language weekly in Montreal read by a community of 30,000 Portuguese. "We are people too. I pay my taxes and I have a voice just as much as any 18-year-old man who's never paid a cent."

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## international



Serious blow: John Cook, known as the Bubble Man, demonstrating his ability to blow huge bubbles in Albany, Georgia. Mr Cook is touring the US, hoping to blow a 100ft-long bubble in every state. Photograph: AP

# Major faces grilling at Commonwealth summit

Sydney — John Major's defence of France's nuclear tests in the Pacific is likely to provoke an onslaught against Britain at the Commonwealth Heads of Government meeting in Auckland, New Zealand next week. With the Queen in attendance as head of the Commonwealth, Britain looks like being isolated and embarrassed.

Australia and New Zealand will lead moves to condemn France and China for their continued nuclear tests. Britain's earlier refusal to oppose the French tests, saying they were "a matter for the French government", irritated Canberra and Wellington, which felt let down by London's disinclination to indicate any sympathy for its old Commonwealth friends over an issue which has prompted protest throughout the Pacific.

But Mr Major's public defence of the tests when he met President Jacques Chirac on Monday, three days after

## Robert Milliken on the fallout from the PM's defence of French nuclear tests

France had exploded its third nuclear device in eight weeks, provoked criticism of Britain across political lines in Australia yesterday.

One of the Labor government's most senior ministers, Bob McMullan, trade and acting foreign minister, said: "If Mr Major is of this view, perhaps he should contact Mr Chirac and organise for the next tests to be conducted under the English Channel... But we shouldn't let this detract from the main game. Australia's primary aim is to mobilise international opinion against the French tests. Australia has the overwhelming majority of support on this from other Commonwealth countries."

John Howard, leader of the opposition conservative Liberal-National coalition, said: "Mr Major has weakened the inter-

national effort to persuade France to stop the tests in the face of growing world anger at the French, even from within Britain. Mr Major fails to understand the hostility in Australia and among Pacific nations to the French tests. In New Zealand, he will discover the extent of anger within the Commonwealth."

Alexander Downer, opposition spokesman on foreign affairs, said: "His comments show an insensitivity to the Australian people. He has shown no understanding of the growing desire of the world to be rid of nuclear weapons... Blood ties for Australia and New Zealand have counted for little. It's a case of water is thicker than blood."

Jim Bolger, New Zealand's Prime Minister and host of the Commonwealth summit, had

been hoping to steer a conciliatory course after meeting Mr Major and Mr Chirac at the United Nations 50th-anniversary session last week. But Mr Major's defence of Mr Chirac has dashed any hopes Mr Bolger had of averting a row.

Officials in Canberra and Wellington expressed dismay yesterday that Mr Major could have gone so far on the eve of a summit to be held in a country which has been a prime mover against the French tests. The British stand is likely further to weaken relations with the old Commonwealth countries now it has apparently demonstrated again that it places membership of the EU and the nuclear club ahead of Commonwealth concerns.

Mr Major's decision will also put the Queen in an awkward position in Auckland, particularly as she may face protests from New Zealanders angered by the Anglo-French nuclear alliance.

## Officials scorn British talk of nuclear liaison

CHRISTOPHER BELLAMY  
Defence Correspondent

There may be less than meets the eye to Franco-British nuclear co-operation.

Officials in the Foreign Office and the Ministry of Defence yesterday said they were unaware of any proposals to substantiate Monday's announcement by John Major and President Jacques Chirac of France, which promised greater liaison between France and Britain. In practice, official sources said, both countries were committed to maintaining independent nuclear deterrent forces.

The leaders said there was "considerable convergence between the two countries on nuclear doctrine and policy". Given that Britain and France are the only European nuclear powers with nuclear forces of similar size, and that a nuclear, biological or chemical attack on one would send fall-out drifting over the other, that is hardly surprising. But officials yesterday said the idea of one country relying on the other to deter an attack was out of the question.

"We do not see situations arising in which the vital interests of either France or the UK could be threatened without the vital interests of the other also being threatened", the joint statement continued. Asked if that meant France would retaliate if a missile landed in England, or that Britain might retaliate if one landed in France, one source said: "Absolutely not. And the French would answer 'Non' as well."

The Foreign Office also denied Britain and France had agreed that a "low-yield" (small explosion) nuclear strike might be used as a "warning shot" when the vital interests of either were threatened.

There has been some discussion of Britain and France al-

ternating nuclear deterrent submarine patrols, but to do so would undermine the philosophy of an independent deterrent. Neither Britain nor France has said it will develop a successor to their warheads - France's Pacific tests include trials of a new warhead for a submarine-launched missile.

Since Britain abandoned its requirement for a stand-off nuclear missile for the RAF, the prospect of co-operation with France in that area has also disappeared.

The only area where both countries are independently setting up new systems, and where there is scope for co-operation, is in perfecting computer predictions of nuclear explosions, which obviate the need for any future tests.

Some independent experts concluded the statement might be a coded message that Britain would gain long-term benefit from the French nuclear tests in the Pacific. Britain has not denied assisting France with its computer-simulation techniques, and is expected to gain something in return, possibly collaboration in developing new nuclear weapon designs without the need to test them.

Until recently, both Britain and France said they could not sign up to a full Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT), due to come into force next year. Then the French agreed to do so, provided they could carry out the current round of tests before the ban came into force.

Patricia Chilton, of Manchester Metropolitan University, who specialises in Franco-British security co-operation, said: "It would have been impossible for the British and French governments to agree to a CTBT without both of them acquiring the necessary extra information for computer simulation in the meantime."



Allies: The British and French chiefs of air staff, Air Chief Marshal Sir Michael Graydon and General Jean Rannou, at RAF High Wycombe for the inauguration of the Franco-British Air Group. Photograph: PA

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# Paris gets tough on explosive 'banlieues'

MARY DEJEVSKY  
Paris

Car-burning, looting and stone-throwing erupted again yesterday on one of the tough estates in the soulless concrete wasteland south of Paris. Thirteen people were detained and one policeman was injured.

The disturbances, near Grigny, were the latest in a rash of incidents on housing estates (known simply as *banlieues*) across France. Last weekend alone there were violent confrontations near Strasbourg and Mulhouse in Alsace, near Toulouse in the south-west, near Grenoble in the south-east and near Dijon in Burgundy.

Estates to the north and east of Paris were also affected, and a policeman was in intensive care after being shot in the head in Mantes-la-Jolie, a town to the west of Paris with a history of trouble.

With disturbances being reported nightly, "what to do about the *banlieues*" has become an important concern. But the authorities have been sending distinctly mixed signals.

Last week President Jacques Chirac talked about the need to "extend a helping hand", provide more jobs and services and do nothing that might be construed as a "provocation". His remarks contrasted with his call in the election campaign for the elimination of "no-go areas" and were hailed as evidence that he had learned that the seething *banlieues* could not be subdued by force.

On Monday, however, the Interior Ministry's director of

public security, Daniel Duglery, announced new, tougher policing for the estates.

Special units were being trained and equipped with fast cars to deal with car theft and joy-riding and with bullet-proof vests and rubber bullets.

In another sign that the *banlieues* were in for a hard time, the judiciary announced an investigation into an "Afghan terrorist connection", citing evidence that "dozens" of young people from certain es-

tates had received terrorist training in Afghanistan.

The authorities insist the outbreaks derive from the same factors as earlier violence: the preponderance of young people on the estates, high unemployment and racial tension caused by high concentrations of North African immigrants.

Many recent incidents, however, have specific causes, which testify to policing which is seen as too heavy-handed.

The disturbances at Grigny are said to have begun when youths tried to attack a flat occupied by someone they believed was responsible for the death of a youth from the Maghreb. The presumed culprit was in custody, but they did not know that. There have been several instances of groups of youths applying their own rough justice where they think the police have failed.

The incident at Mantes-la-Jolie appears to have been the result of police intervening to stop a hashish deal. Other incidents have begun as gang-fights or joy-riding which the police tried to halt.

## Jobless blow for Chirac

Paris — President Jacques Chirac's election pledge to cut unemployment suffered a setback yesterday with the publication of figures showing that the jobless total rose in September for the second month running, writes Mary Dejevsky.

The increase, of 28,000, or 1 per cent, compared with August, brought the total number of people seeking work to 2,952,100, or 11.5 per cent of the active population.

The franc, which had risen after Mr Chirac's pledge last Thursday to cut the budget deficit, fell back after the figures were announced.

The government had hoped the 0.9 per cent rise in August was an anomaly. A worrying feature was the 5.1 per cent rise in the number of men under 25 looking for jobs: government measures have concentrated precisely on this group, and on the long-term unemployed.



Fired up: Trade unionists at Gironde, near Bordeaux, burning tyres in front of the town hall

Photograph: AFP

There is a further explanation which is rarely mentioned by officials: the mild autumn, which has allowed street life to continue longer than usual, and the heightened police activity dictated by the anti-terrorist alert codenamed "Vigipirate".

From the first terrorist bomb on 25 July, when the chief suspects were identified as being of "North African appearance", it was almost exclusively young men of that description who were stopped and searched. After the identification of

Khaled Kelkal as the prime suspect in September, the estates themselves, at least those with big North African populations, were subject to early-morning raids and night-time patrols. With "Vigipirate" now in effect for two months, and

Kelkal dead, shot by police, resentment has built up. North African men complain they are stopped whenever they go out. Many were born in France and carry French papers. In this atmosphere, the slightest spark can cause a blaze.

## Panic as battle for Jaffna rages

TIM MCGIRK  
New Delhi

Nearly 100,000 Tamils were trapped on the northern shore of the Jaffna lagoon yesterday, trying to clamber aboard rowing boats, launches and any floating object to escape a Sri Lankan army attack on the rebel citadel-city of Jaffna.

A government military spokesman said that three divisions, totalling 21,000 men, supported by tanks, artillery and aircraft, had closed to within five miles of Jaffna, the nation's second-largest city.

It has been under the quixotic, revolutionary rule of the Tamil Tiger guerrillas for more than a decade. Relief workers said that many young Tamil recruits had joined the exodus across the lagoon.

Some officers predicted that Jaffna would fall to the Sri Lankan forces within days, but a Tamil Tiger spokesman in Paris claimed that the rebels were mounting a counter-offensive. "Our forces are putting up stiff, ferocious resistance."

In the bloodiest battle so far in the army's two-week offensive, troops on Monday captured Neerveli, a key rebel base five miles from Jaffna. Casualties were high: more than 90 soldiers and 204 Tamil guerrillas were killed before the Tigers pulled back, dragging their dy-

ing and wounded towards Jaffna, the army said.

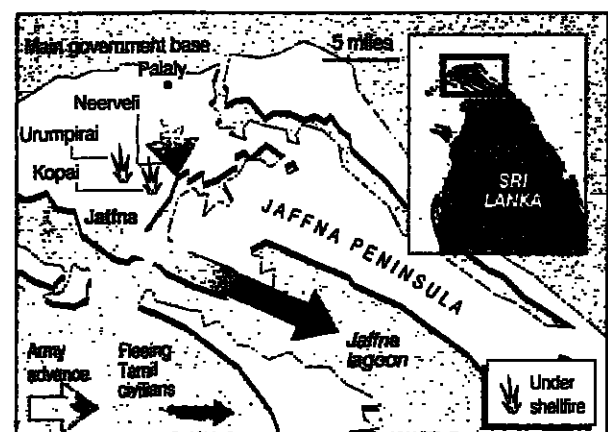
Aid workers in Jaffna spoke of a "calamitous" humanitarian tragedy, with as many as 300,000 Tamil civilians trapped with nowhere safe to run.

The capture of Jaffna would be a severe blow to the Tigers but not a fatal one. The Tamils have run the Jaffna peninsula as a separate state, with their own traffic police, schools, tax collectors, postmen and judges. If Jaffna falls, the Tigers are expected to melt away into the dense jungles across the wide lagoon.

The military command claimed that the Tigers' chief, Velupillai Prabhakaran, has already slipped off the peninsula and may be hiding at a jungle rebel base in the Kilinochchi or Mullaitivu areas.

India would like to see the rebel chief caught, too, and may be helping the Sri Lankans with intelligence and supplies. The Indians accused the Tamil rebel of ordering the 1991 bomb attack which killed Rajiv Gandhi, the former Indian prime minister.

Unless the army seizes or kills the Tamil leader, it is doubtful that they can crush the rebels, even with the conquest of Jaffna. Although many Tamils fear the Tiger chief and his revolutionaries, they fear the Sri Lankan army even more.



## US banks on peace in the Middle East

PATRICK COCKBURN  
Jerusalem

In the face of opposition from Europe and Arab oil states, the US has forced through the establishment of a Middle East development bank as an economic symbol of the peace agreements that Israel has signed with the Palestinians, Jordan and Egypt.

The Middle East and North Africa development bank, agreed yesterday at the economic summit in Amman and with capital of \$5bn (£3.2bn), is regarded with suspicion by Saudi Arabia and other oil states, which think they may be called on to fund it.

West European states believe enough financial institutions funding development exist already in the Middle East.

Israel and the US want to institutionalise the peace accords agreed with the PLO in 1993 and Jordan in 1994.

Warren Christopher, the US Secretary of State, told the summit, attended by more than 1,000 officials and businessmen, that "the bank's establishment is a major milestone, not least because it is the first such initiative put forward by the parties to the peace process themselves".

Another sign that Israel is establishing economic links with

the Arab world is its agreement with Qatar to buy \$3bn of liquefied natural gas, signed yesterday. Israel will also belong to a regional tourist board being established in the region.

Israel's Foreign Minister, Shimon Peres, denied Israeli seeks to control the Middle East economy but there is no doubt it is breaking out of economic isolation. The new development bank will be based in Cairo to satisfy Egypt, which fears it is being marginalised as other Arab leaders establish relations with Israel.

Jordan has good reason to be satisfied with the summit, which enabled it to improve ties with Washington and the Gulf Arabs, which have been frosty owing to its neutrality in the Gulf war. Yasser Arafat, the PLO chairman, has similar motives and needs aid to underpin his rule in Gaza and the West Bank.

Despite the agreements in Amman on the bank, tourism and Qatari gas, relations between the participants remain prickly. The Egyptian Foreign Minister, Amr Moussa, criticised Jordan for hurrying to normalise relations with Israel. King Hussein replied: "Egypt preceded us by 17 years." Mr Peres also clashed with Arab journalists, asking if they wanted Israel "to commit suicide".

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Bosnia peace talks: Three Balkan presidents head for US amid fears that odds remain stacked against final agreement

# This is last chance to end the war, says Clinton

RUPERT CORNWELL  
Washington

As the leaders of Bosnia, Croatia, and Serbia headed for Dayton, Ohio, a sombre President Bill Clinton warned that the peace talks that open today at an air force base in the American Midwest represented the best "and perhaps the last chance for a very long time" of ending the Bosnian war.

Flanked by Warren Christopher, the Secretary of State, and the chief US Bosnia negotiator, Richard Holbrooke, Mr Clinton said the US could not impose a peace on the belligerents - "only the parties to this terrible conflict can end it." But American leadership was essential, as was the participation of US ground troops in the Nato peace-keeping force to police any settlement.

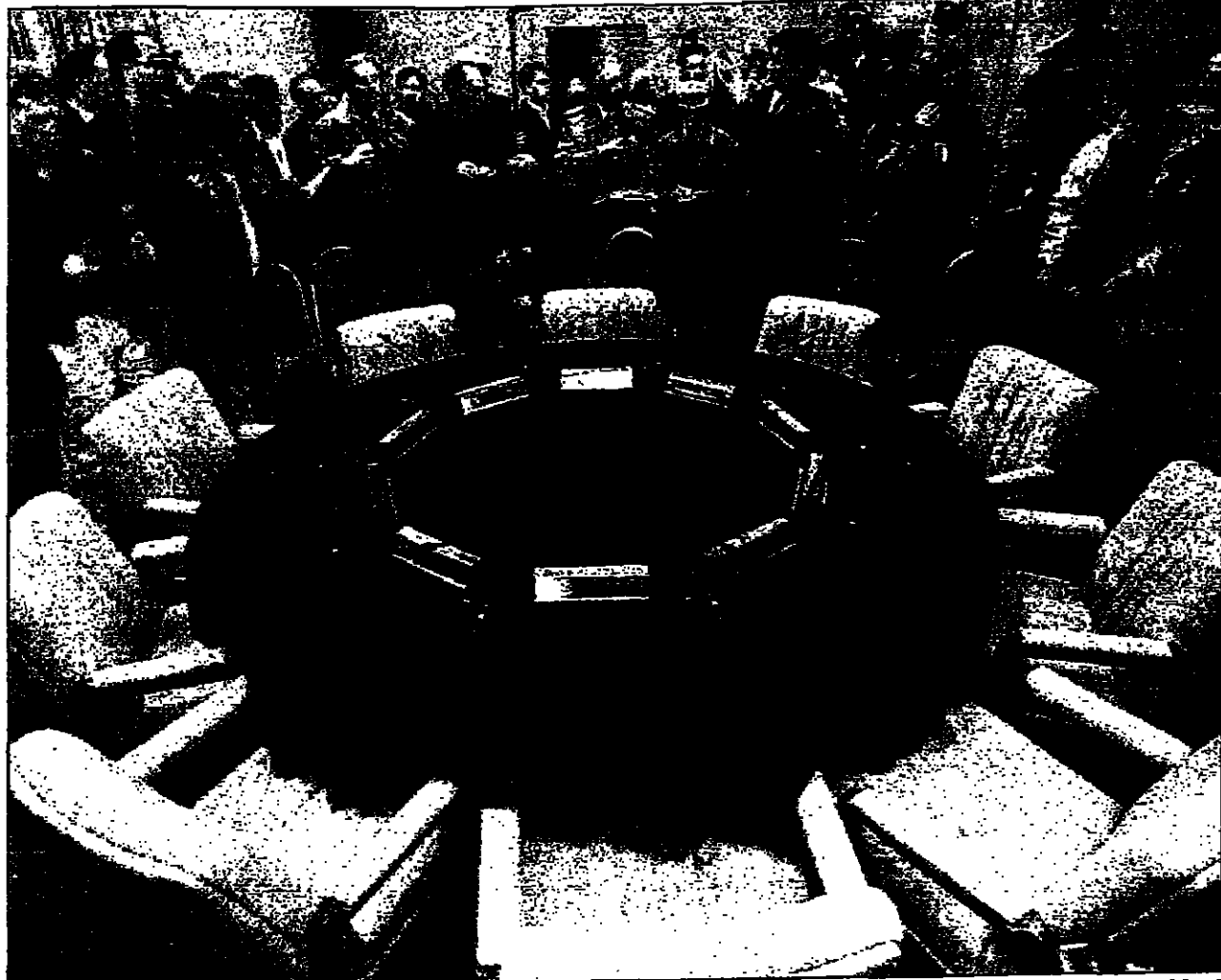
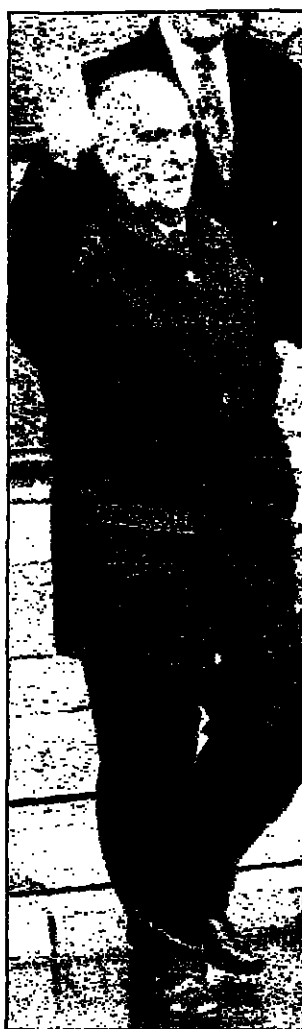
Promising to seek "an expression of support" from a sceptical Congress for the operation, Mr Clinton reiterated that the 20,000 or more US troops sent to Bosnia would not be asked to enforce an unenforceable peace. The first requirement was a real settlement

at Dayton, and an agreement "to end this mindless slaughter." At Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, preparations were complete for the arrival of Presidents Slobodan Milosevic of Serbia, Franjo Tudjman of Croatia, and Alija Izetbegovic of Bosnia, and an estimated 200 aides and other diplomats who will be housed on the base. But what happens when the negotiations begin is anyone's guess.

Several potential pitfalls loom, starting with the ability of Mr Milosevic to sign a deal on behalf of the Bosnian Serbs. "If not, we're not going to have an agreement," warns Mr Holbrooke, whose arm-twisting and shuttle diplomacy have been largely responsible for bringing the peace process this far.

Then there are the tensions between Bosnians and Croats in their federation, due to be awarded 51 per cent of the country's territory under the draft settlement to be presented by the US in Dayton; Croatia's threats to use force to regain Eastern Slavonia from the Serbs and the renewed outcry over atrocities committed by the Bosnian Serbs at Srebrenica, with which Mr Milosevic could yet be linked. Even if he is not, the Bosnian Muslims are demanding the war-crimes issue be tackled directly in the talks.

Finally, the administration must contend with Congress's hostility to the deployment of US soldiers, symbolised by a House of Representatives resolution this week, demanding Congress's approval before-



Goodbye to all that: President Izetbegovic of Bosnia (left) leaving for the summit at a US Air Force base (centre), where he will meet President Milosevic of Serbia (right)

hand. The non-binding resolution was carried by 315 votes to 103, backed by half of House Democrats as well as almost every Republican.

And these difficulties do not touch upon the substance of any settlement itself. Understandably, Mr Holbrooke plays down the prospects of success in negotiations which are likely to be tougher even than the 1978-79

Middle East talks. Dayton, he says, is "a gamble". The talks could last a week or three months, "but with no assurance of success", only the near certainty that failure would send Bosnia back to war.

Under the "proximity talks" formula, modelled on the Middle East talks at Camp David, the parties will talk directly or via Mr Holbrooke and other

mediators. The starting point is a "very specific" draft peace settlement drawn up by Mr Holbrooke and the five-nation Contact Group. The negotiations will deal separately with the various issues - the constitution, the split of territory, the status of Sarajevo, reconstruction, the return of refugees - so that impasse on one will not block progress on the rest.

A strict media black-out will operate, with what briefings there are being held in Washington, except for specific interim agreements, for which the press will be summoned to Dayton. The three presidents have promised to say nothing either. The plenary sessions will be held at the base's Hope Hotel, named after the comedian Bob Hope.

■ Sarajevo — The United Nations is dramatically cutting its troops in Bosnia even before a peace deal is signed, reflecting its financial crisis and the prospect of UN soldiers being replaced by a new Nato-led force, Reuters reports. The UN military spokesman, Chris Vernon, said that that up to 6,000 soldiers were ready to go home.

## Rape row dogs Perry in Japan

RICHARD LLOYD PARRY  
Tokyo

The US Defense Secretary, William Perry, arrived in Tokyo yesterday hoping to defuse the diplomatic crisis sparked by the alleged rape of a schoolgirl by US servicemen on the island of Okinawa.

In meetings with his opposite number, Seishiro Eto, and the Japanese Foreign Minister, Yohei Kono, Mr Perry will address the problem of how to assert the importance of the

US-Japan Security Treaty, while quelling anger over the rape and over the massive US military presence on the small southern island.

"The key message is that the US-Japan relationship is an absolute key to security and stability in Asia and that nobody benefits more than Japan," Mr Perry told reporters on his plane. "While we are deeply sorry for the suffering of the schoolgirl and her family, we cannot let this poison our entire relationship."

Even his own officials agreed that this is an ambitious goal for a two-day trip and that the issue may not be resolved before President Bill Clinton's summit with the Japanese Prime Minister, Tomichi Murayama, in three weeks.

Protests against the rape have spread throughout Japan, with demands for a reduction of the US presence on Okinawa, where 29,000 troops and three-quarters of US bases in Japan are concentrated. Mr Perry said last week that while the bases

on Okinawa may be "consolidated", troop levels would remain the same. Yesterday, he moved closer to the Japanese government's line, saying units might be moved to different parts of the country.

For Tokyo that presents another question: if not Okinawa, where? US officials cite the cost of relocating bases, which would be borne by Japan, as an obstacle. Another is that if the Americans are unpopular on Okinawa, they would be even less welcome elsewhere.



Lubbers: compromise choice

## Lubbers winning the race to head Nato

SARAH HELM  
Brussels

After two weeks of back-room negotiation, Rudi Lubbers, the former Dutch prime minister, appears to have won broad backing to become the next Nato Secretary-General.

Mr Lubbers has not yet been formally proposed for the job, and Washington has not yet stated its position. But with German, French and British support, a formal announcement is expected shortly.

For Britain and the United States, Mr Lubbers is a compromise who has emerged as favourite in the absence of a more attractive candidate. After the resignation of the Belgian Willy Claes over a bribe scandal in Belgium, Washington and London had hoped that a heavyweight candidate would emerge at a crucial period in Nato's history.

According to Foreign Office sources, Britain would have backed Volke Rihbe, the former German defence minister, but he expressed no interest. John Major last week voiced the intention of presenting a strong British candidate: Sir Leon Brittan, Britain's senior European Union commissioner.

Mr Major was encouraged to put a name forward by the US, which first expressed the hope that Douglas Hurd would take the job. However, the former foreign secretary has shown no interest in the Nato position.

The suggestion that Sir Leon be put forward was apparently not greeted with enthusiasm by Britain's European partners. Although highly respected, he was not considered sufficiently popular, or to have enough experience in defence.

The Hague has been reluctant to propose Mr Lubbers formally following a string of failures by the Dutch to win top European posts. Germany was widely believed to be opposed to Mr Lubbers, who tried unsuccessfully last year to become President of the European Commission. However, Chancellor Helmut Kohl is now keen to forge close ties with the Netherlands. France is eager to support Mr Lubbers, in order to prevent Uffe Ellemann-Jensen, the former Danish foreign minister, from getting the job. Angered by Danish protests over French nuclear tests, Paris has manoeuvred hard against the Danish candidate.

## Claims grow that Baku disaster was sabotage

PHIL REEVES  
Moscow

Allegations that the Baku metro disaster in Azerbaijan was caused by a bomb increased in volume yesterday after investigators reportedly found two mysterious large holes in the side of one of the wrecked railway carriages.

Azeri national television last night quoted experts who said the holes pointed to the use of an explosive device.

The allegation was that the bomb was charged with poisonous gases which killed many of the victims.

In Moscow, the Russian news agency Itar-Tass quoted sources who said that the bombing was "to aggravate the social and political situation" in the republic in the run-up to parliamentary elections on 12 November.

This has been the focus of po-

litical dissent in the unstable former Soviet republic.

At least 289 people were killed and 269 hurt when a fire broke out in a tunnel between two stations in central Baku, an oil city of 1.8 million people on the western shores of the Caspian Sea.

At first, the Azeri government commission of inquiry investigating the disaster concluded that it was caused by an electrical fault and blamed outdated Soviet-era equipment, but since then the authorities have begun to entertain the possibility of sabotage.

The theory is being taken seriously, not least because 20 people have died in two bombings in Baku's metro system in the last 18 months, but the picture is complicated by the suspicion that the metro's operators may be trying to blame a non-existent saboteur

in order to avoid being held responsible themselves.

Adding weight to this theory, a fire broke out yesterday on the Baku underground after a train engine caught fire at the Kara Karayev station.

The Deputy Prime Minister, Abbas Abbasov, said the fire was put out promptly by station workers.

Officials have said many of the victims of Saturday's disaster were poisoned by gases released as flames swept through the tunnel.

Azeri national television - which has been under strict government control since the tragedy - quoted experts saying that poison was used in the bomb.

If so, the disaster would be a repetition - on a terrifying scale - of the poisoning of passengers in the Tokyo metro in March, allegedly by a religious cult. In which 12 people died.

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# Thorn in side of Nigeria generals

DAVID ORR

Ken Saro-Wiwa, the writer and environmental activist sentenced to death yesterday, has been a thorn in the side of the Nigerian government ever since his Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People began to campaign against Shell oil company five years ago.

Mosop aimed to force Shell to repair environmental damage caused by its activities, and to pass a greater share of oil revenues to the 500,000 Ogoni people, crammed into the 400sq mile territory of Ogoni land.

The region, dotted with oil spills, contaminated water and gas flares, is one of the most polluted on the planet. Mosop protests forced Shell to halt operations in mid-1993. In August, the Nigerian military encouraged neighbouring ethnic groups to attack the Ogonis, and used mobile "kill-and-go" police to attack demonstrations.



Saro-Wiwa: Oil protests

Mr Saro-Wiwa's stance provoked divisions among the Ogoni, but the moderates were sidelined by a Mosop intolerance and government repression.

The tribunal which condemned Mr Saro-Wiwa and three others for the murder of four Mosop members has been sitting in the oil city of Port Harcourt since February.

Human rights organisations, including Human Rights Watch/Africa, have been campaigning for the trial to be stopped. "The tribunal lacks independence and impartiality and has been the subject of intense international criticism", said a report by Human Rights Watch.

The murders of the four Mosop activists took place in May last year. Mr Saro-Wiwa and his colleagues are alleged to have carried out the killings because the men were selling out to the military government. Two of the murdered men were his in-laws and the other two close friends.

Campaigners for the release of the accused admit Mr Saro-Wiwa had differences with the murdered men over the leadership of Mosop but contend the four men were murdered by government agents bent on discrediting Mosop.

The military regime of General Sani Abacha has been trying to suppress the secessionist movement which is demanding compensation from Shell for pollution of Ogoni land by nearly 100 on-shore oil wells.



Protesters chained to the doors of the Nigerian High Commission in London yesterday Photograph: John Lawrence

Oil export revenue accounts for about 90 per cent of Nigeria's foreign exchange, and a 1978 decree ruled that all land where oil is found belongs to the federal state.

"The land is so devastated environmentally that fishermen and farmers cannot sustain their lives", Dr Owens Saro-Wiwa told the *Independent* shortly before the verdict on his

brother was announced. "The government and the oil companies did not like the demands being made by our organisation. They are prepared to do anything so that other ethnic groups in Nigeria will not start agitation".

Dr Owens Saro-Wiwa, who granted the interview at a clandestine location in Lagos, is on the run. He claimed that his

brother had been tortured and that more than 30 Mosop activists are in detention before state prosecutors who want to question him in connection with a \$654m (£414m) fortune that he is alleged to have amassed in secret while he was in power. Mr Roh would be the first president in the history of South Korea to be examined by prosecutors.

In a statement, Ken Saro-Wiwa said that after his arrest he was tortured. Lawyers de-

fending Mr Saro-Wiwa pulled out of the case in the summer in protest at the failure of state officials to submit key evidence to the tribunal.

The Human Rights Watch report, which was published in July, says that at least 50 Ogonis were executed without trial by the security forces after the murders of the four pro-government Ogoni leaders.

## Yeltsin condition 'improved'

Moscow — President Boris Yeltsin's wife, Naina, said his condition had improved, although aides expressed doubt that he would be well enough to receive visitors in the near future. The US State Department said it had been told that Mr Yeltsin will recuperate for at least five more weeks. In his first official order since he suffered a mild heart attack last Thursday, the President demanded information on why some parties were barred from parliamentary elections on 17 December.

## Commission authors brought to book

Brussels — The European Commission, reeling from controversy over recent books by the Danish Commissioner and a senior British official, plans to publish a code of conduct which will prohibit the 20 commissioners from writing articles or giving speeches for money or gifts. Any commissioner planning to publish a book covering EU matters will have to allow the Commission President, Jacques Santer, to vet the manuscript.

## Islamic Jihad leader's body flown to Syria

Damascus — The body of the Islamic Jihad leader Fathi Shkaki, shot in Malta on Thursday, was flown to Syria, where it was met by Ramadan Abdallah Shallah, making his first appearance as the new head of the radical Palestinian group.

## Italian journalists halt TV newscasts

Milan — Italian journalists silenced television newscasts and threatened five days of strikes at newspapers, magazines and news agencies as a wage dispute gathered force.

## Roh under scrutiny

Seoul — The disgraced former South Korean president, Roh Tae Woo (right), has been summoned to appear today before state prosecutors who want to question him in connection with a \$654m (£414m) fortune that he is alleged to have amassed in secret while he was in power. Mr Roh would be the first president in the history of South Korea to be examined by prosecutors.



## Ankara offers EU another olive branch

Ankara — In another attempt to win approval for a crucial customs union, Turkey's Prime Minister, Tansu Ciller, proposed lifting martial law in south-eastern Turkey, where the military has fought secessionist Kurds for 11 years. The European Parliament has threatened to veto the pact unless Turkey improves its human-rights record.

## Lawyers quit Muslim Brotherhood trial

Cairo — Lawyers representing 49 members of the Muslim Brotherhood being tried in an Egyptian military court on anti-government charges have withdrawn, saying their clients were facing political, not criminal, charges. Meanwhile, the government pressed on with its crackdown against the Brotherhood, arresting seven members, including the son of the group's founder.

## Tanzanian opposition to boycott new poll

Dar es Salaam — Opposition politicians in Tanzania said they would boycott repeat elections called for next week in the country's capital, after the original ballot was scrapped because of chaos at polling booths. Presenting a united front, they plan to ask the High Court to declare null and void both the presidential and parliamentary polls.

## Jeans make Indonesians see red

Jakarta — Indonesian security forces in the Java town of Surakarta have seized eight dozen pairs of children's jeans bearing the Communist hammer and sickle. Since the mid-1960s the government has banned books, records, films and other products which it says contain Communist teachings or symbols.

# Election battle rages in an SA gangland

Johannesburg — Westbury, or Western as it is better known from its old name of Western Coloured Township, is a sprawling neighbourhood of box-like houses in a part of Johannesburg where the experienced do not stop at red lights.

There are few trees or patches of grass to break up the monotony of asphalt pavement and cement alleyways. Only graffiti and idle young men decorate the neighbourhood. The writing on walls preaches the Bible, while the youths watch the streets with busy eyes. Occasionally there is quick hand movement followed by the flash of a gunmetal as a pistol is pulled out of a waistband.

## Robert Block sees a struggle for hearts and minds in a slum where the gun rules

This is gang country, home to the Fastguns and Varados and other groups who wage nightly gun-battles to control the local drugs trade, one of the few sources of employment in this part of town. More recently, however, Western has become a different kind of battleground, a centre of an intense political struggle for the hearts and minds of people who live here, waged not with guns or threats, but with anti-drug slogans and rallies for better housing and lower rents. Western is in the heart of Ward 18, one of the most hotly contested areas in South Africa's first all-race lo-

cal elections, which take place today. It comprises townships which used to be reserved for Coloured people (of mixed race).

Yet for all the symbolic importance of electing new and accountable authorities, and despite the heavy promotion to get people to vote, today's polls have generated little real interest or enthusiasm.

Ward 18 looks like being an exception, with the vote set to be a dead heat between President Nelson Mandela's African National Congress and the former ruling National Party, with a well-known local do-gooder

running as a spoiler. "Apathy may be a worry for some candidates in other wards, but certainly not in mine," said Shahit Wadvala, the ANC candidate.

Mr Wadvala believes he has a 50-50 chance of victory. "This is not an easy ward. It has a township, poor inner-city areas and a middle-class suburb. The whole ward is predominantly mixed-race, and Coloured politics is always complicated. The National Party has solid backing here," he said.

Coloureds have been traditionally fearful of unfettered black majority rule, and in areas where they are a strong

force, such as the Western Cape, they tended to side with the conservative white National Party.

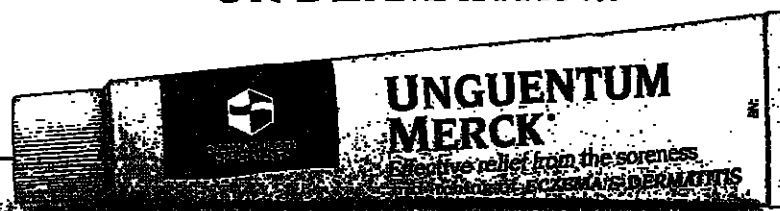
But in Western, even that is not a certainty. According to Ralph Goodall, principal of the Newclare primary school, the independent candidate, Florrie Daniels, an elderly volunteer worker, also has some support. "She has done a lot of good work here over the years, working for better housing and living conditions," he said.

The cost of municipal housing and rates are the key issues in Ward 18. Many Western residents complained that while

black townships have had their local rates capped, Western and other nearby Coloured areas have not, a fact they blame on the ANC, because they say it does not respond to Coloured needs. Crime, of course, is the other key issue, which all parties promise to tackle. But locals see the cost and quality of housing as being intricately linked to the crime problem.

"Look at how we live on top of on another in these decaying boxes," said Vernon Naidoo, the local school janitor and a mediator between the gangs. "There is hardly room to breathe. Living like this encourages gangs and people killing each other."

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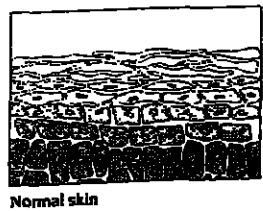
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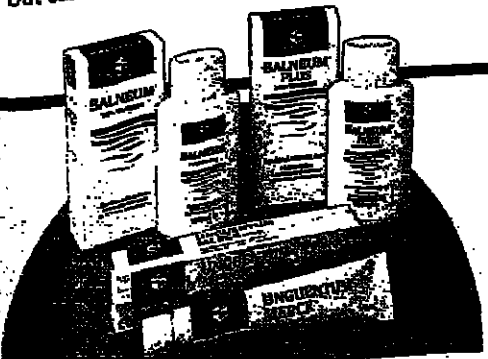
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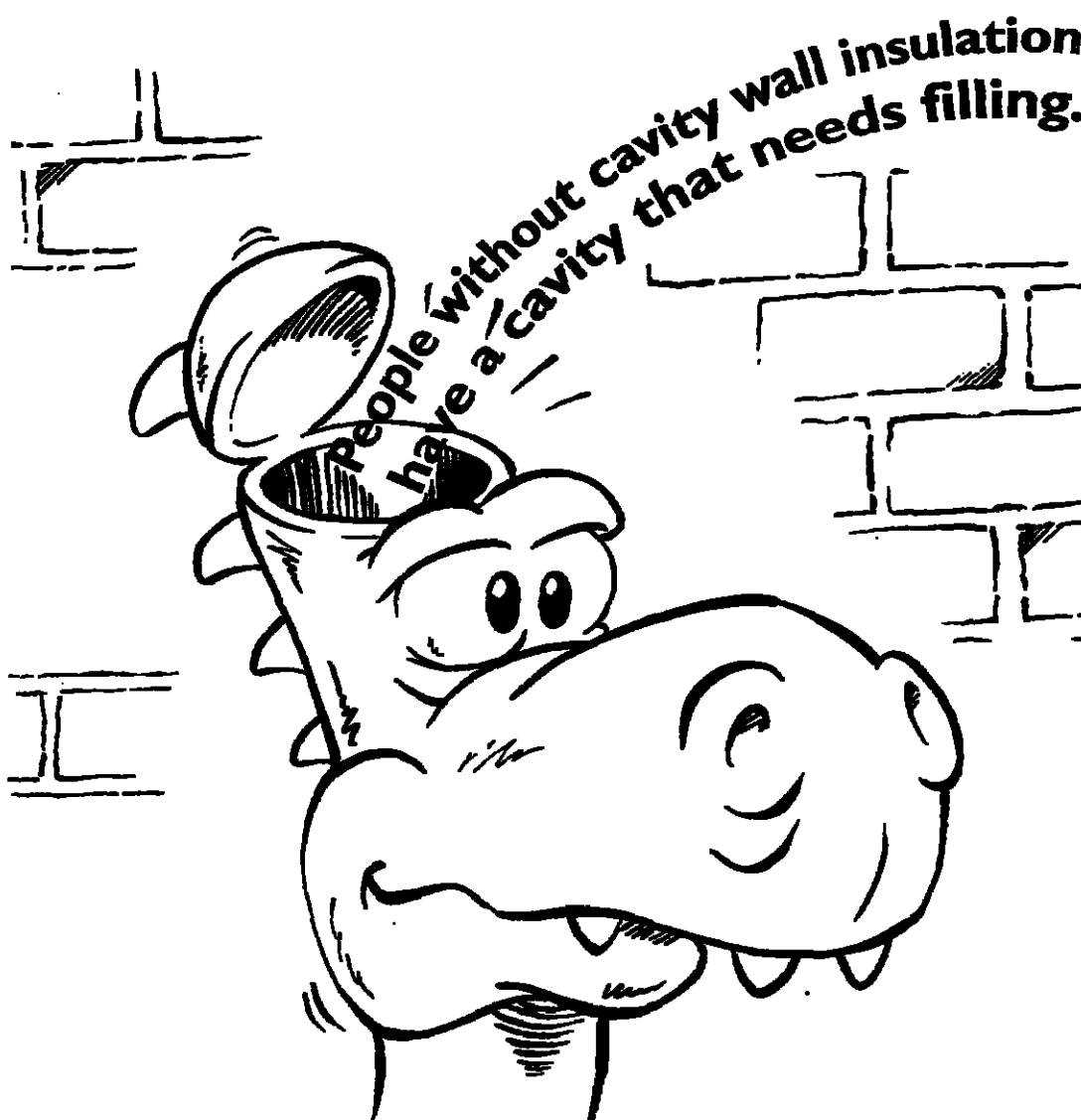
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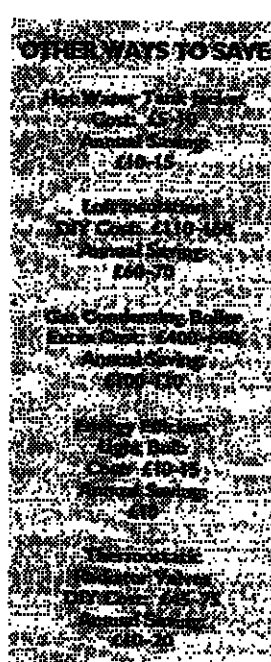
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## news analysis

# The 'gay gene' is back on the scene

Does new research finally prove that homosexuality can be inherited? **Steve Connor** investigates the latest controversial findings

The "gay gene" has cruised back on to the scene. Homosexuality tends to run in families, according to Dr Dean Hamer, the American geneticist who has made a study of the genetic basis of human sexual orientation. His latest research, apparently confirming a genetic component to homosexuality, has once again rekindled controversy into the genetics of the more sensitive aspects of human behaviour.

Two years ago Dr Hamer had shown in a study of the family histories of 114 homosexual men that being gay tends to be inherited. He found that 13.5 per cent of the brothers of these men were also gay, compared with just 2 per cent in the general population, a significant difference that appeared to show an inherited component to sexual orientation.

Dr Hamer also found that maternal uncles and maternal male cousins were more likely than by chance alone to be homosexual, indicating that whatever the inherited component was it was likely to be transmitted through the maternal line. This implicated the X chromosome which men inherit from their mothers (they receive their Y chromosome from their fathers).

He conducted detailed molecular studies of the genetic material — the DNA blueprint — of the X chromosomes of 40 pairs of gay brothers to study "genetic markers", which are rather like signposts on a road map. He found 33 of the paired brothers had co-inherited genetic markers on the same region of the X chromosome, known as Xq28.

This region represents just 0.02 per cent of the entire genetic make-up of humans, and yet it could contain up to several hundred genes. Although Dr Hamer

had not found a "gay gene", he had discovered convincing evidence that this region influences sexual orientation in some men. When this work emerged in a study of publicly, there was an outcry from people who for one reason or another had vested interests in showing homosexuality could or could not be inherited.

Paradoxically, Dr Hamer does not himself believe in a gay gene despite trying more than any other scientist to prove the existence of a genetic, and therefore inherited, component to sexual orientation.

The primary conclusion of his latest work, published yesterday in the journal *Nature Genetics*, is that there is a region on the X chromosome that influences variations in sexual orientation in men, but not in women. Though Dr Hamer adds: "That does not mean we have found a gay gene."

Despite his protestations, however, this has not stopped the world from interpreting his research in this simplistic way. Indeed, he has admitted in the past that finding a gene for homosexuality may be possible. And it is likely that someone somewhere will attempt to use his work to develop a test for gayness, something he has said he would do everything in his power to stop.

The significance of Dr Hamer's latest work is that it answers some of his severest critics, who have called into question the validity of his earlier research, published in *Science* in July 1993. Dr Hamer, who refuses to answer questions on allegations that he is being investigated by the US government's Office of Research Integrity, robustly defends all his research. "This current work is not under any question whatsoever" and the "main findings" of

the previous study "have never been challenged", he said. Any further questions on that topic he refers to his lawyers. The deep controversy stirred up by Dr Hamer's work is a rare phenomenon in the arcane world of genetics research, which usually concerns itself with identifying and eradicating or at least alleviating inherited diseases. Homosexuality, however, is not a disease nor an abnormality.

Some of the critics, when Dr Hamer's findings first appeared, a number of commentators, including at least one religious leader, appeared to countenance the prospect of a prenatal test for a gay gene, with the possibility of abortion. (The *Daily Mail* heralded the research with the famous headline: "Abortion hope after 'gay genes' findings".)

At another extreme, the research was condemned by some gay groups and scientists who felt it proved nothing except to demonstrate the gullibility of those who want to believe in the genetic determinism of complex human behaviours. "If you are investigating the causes of homosexuality," said gay activist Peter Tatchell, "why not look at the causes of heterosexuality? The implication is that heterosexuality is normal, natural and unproblematic."

Curiously, in the US at least, a number of gay groups welcomed the research, arguing that it demonstrated the natural condition of homosexuality, akin to inheriting blue eyes or brown hair, instead of regarding it as the consequence of perverse choices. Just as legislation can be enacted to stop discrimination on grounds of race or sex (both genetically inherited) then the same argument, they believed, could apply to homosexuality.

The overriding concern, however, has been that Dr Hamer's work would lead to the development of a genetic test. Last year, Dr Hamer addressed this fear at the annual meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Science. "People are worried that eventually someone — scientists, the military or insurance companies — might try to

develop blood tests for sexual orientation, or a prenatal test so that expectant mothers could abort a foetus at risk of being gay. I think this would be wrong, unethical, and a terrible abuse of research. It's wrong to discriminate on the basis of genes."

Dr Hamer said he would try to prevent anyone from developing such a test. "We'll have the intellectual property rights for that work and the means will be to not give the results to people who are likely to come to stop discrimination on grounds of race or sex (both genetically inherited) then the same argument, they believed, could apply to homosexuality."

Since 1993, Dr Hamer has expanded his research to include an extensive collaboration with scientists from Colorado University and the prestigious White-

head Institute in Cambridge, Massachusetts. Their latest findings, on another 33 pairs of gay brothers and 11 pairs of heterosexual brothers, confirmed the earlier work.

They also found no evidence that the critical Xq28 region of the X chromosome had anything to do with sexual orientation in lesbian women. According to Dr Hamer, this means he is twice as sure as before that the X chromosome is responsible for the inherited component of being gay, as he has shown 99 per cent are before. The work was finished at the end of a pretty confident 10 years of it.

Such confidence is likely to provoke still further those who criticise the meaningfulness of such research. And Dr Hamer will continue to generate widespread controversy, especially if the day comes when he or someone else is able to announce the discovery of a true "gay gene", which will mean a medical test for homosexuality will not be far behind.

## Arguments for and against

The idea that [genetics] might be the reason for homosexuality does not take into consideration bisexuality. It polarises homosexuality and heterosexuality rather than seeing them as part of a continuum  
— David Fennbach, homosexual activist, July 1993

Some groups on the right, the religious fundamentalists, will say, "Here we have the gene for homosexuality, let's get rid of it." These are the same people who in the Thirties in Germany looked for a master race  
— Michael Cashman of Stonewall, the gay rights group, July 1993

If you are investigating the causes of homosexuality, why not look at the causes of heterosexuality?  
— Peter Tatchell, July 1993

Just because something is ethically complicated doesn't mean it shouldn't be investigated.  
— Dr Bryan Sykes, a geneticist at the Institute of Molecular Medicine in Oxford, July 1993

We are carried along on a pell-mell rush towards biological determinism, a tidal wave of enthusiasm for all things genetic  
— Professor Steven Rose of the Open University, July 1993

We have not found the gene, which we don't think exists, for sexual orientation  
— Dr Dean Hamer, geneticist at the US National Cancer Institute, July 1993

You can never say we're 100 per cent sure, but I'm twice as sure as before. We are better than 99 per cent sure that it's not a fluke  
— Dean Hamer, October 1995

Collectively, what do we gain by finding out about homosexuality? Nothing, except a prompt to identify those people who have and then open them up to all sorts of experimentation to change them  
— Dr David Fennbach, co-founder of the Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation in the United States, July 1993

In my view, the evidence presently available points to a strong influence of nature and only a modest influence of nurture  
— Professor Simon LeVay, US neuroscientist and author of *The Sexual Brain*, July 1993

The gene may be the same thing in men and women, so if you're gay, you'll be gay, but in a woman she'll be a lesbian — perhaps more so than usual — I'll have enough children to make sure that gay men won't have any more  
— Dr Dean Hamer, October 1994

Homosexuality is a disability and if people have not been eliminated before they have children, it is because we wish to have a normal population. Other reasons — I do not see a moral objection for using genetic engineering to limit this particular trend. It would be like correcting many other conditions such as infertility or multiple sclerosis  
— Lord Jakobovits, former chief rabbi, July 1993

Abortion hope after "gay genes" findings  
— *Daily Mail*, July 1993

## HOW GENES SHAPE THE MIND

Graphic: Mark Hayman

## Diary

DAVID USBORNE IN MONTREAL

Apparently, we were 7,000 people packing the main exhibition floor of Montreal's Palais des Congres where the "Oui" camp held its election rally on Monday evening. For the first hour or so, when the early returns were coming in, it felt more like 700,000, so deafening were the roars of ecstasy when result after result seemed to point to a separatist victory. It was all I could do not to break into chants of "Tottenham, Tottenham".

It was actually at 8.59pm, not quite an hour after the polls closed, that the tide turned and the "Oui" lead started to evaporate. The agony came at 9.34, when for a brief moment the tallies projected on the jumbo screens actually read 50:50 before the "Non" pulled ahead. Suddenly, that same room seemed quite empty. To say the mood sagged does not begin to capture it. The same faces that minutes before had been contorted in expressions of raw excitement had gone quite blank. Eyes stared and hundreds of men and women wept silently. A distraught young man charged a camera man and bellowed into the lens, "C'est la guerre maintenant".

It was a night of chants and songs. Quebec's Premier, Jacques Parizeau, who disgraced himself in his concession speech by blaming defeat on the ethnic minority, could not resist joining in from the podium the rhythmic refrain of his followers, "Le Quebec aux Quebecois" (Quebec for Quebecers). Across town at the victorious "Non" camp in the Metropole, a night club taken over for the night, federalist supporters retorted with a taunting variation on the same chorus: "Le Quebec au Canada! Le Quebec au Canada!" (Quebec in Canada). Earlier in the day, the superstitious may have seen a good omen for the "Oui" side in some unexpected flurries of snow across Montreal. In his anthem for independence, folk musician Gilles Vigneault — to Quebecers what Jacques Brel is to francophone Belgians — sang: "Mon pays, ce n'est pas mon pays, c'est l'hiver. Mon pays, ce n'est pas mon pays, c'est le neige" (My country, it is not my country, it is winter. My country, it is not my country, it is snow). But the forecast for Montreal yesterday: "Melting flurries".

Belgium's list of famous people is harder to compile even than Canada's. But this old Brussels hack did a double-take early in the



Oui, the 'non' vote is a crying shame

proceedings at the Palais des Congres when he spotted the bucolic features of none other than José Happort in the crowd. You know, José Happort. Well you probably don't, but he was the man who rekindled the separatist flame in the French-speaking Wallonia region of Belgium in the late

Eighties as the mayor of Les Fourons, a group of francophone hamlets marooned in an otherwise totally Flemish part of the country. With the red cockerel of Wallonia emblazoned on his dark-blue tie, Mr Happort had high hopes of a "Oui" victory which he was ready to use as ammunition to relaunch once more the campaign for devolution in Belgium. "It will show that peaceful separation is possible," he explained. "If the no side wins, it will be because of money." Not to mention those pesky, sport-sport, ethnic.

Among these is the helpful gentleman in my hotel gift shop who for the past two days has been gathering armfuls of newspapers and magazines for my education. This is the Chinatown Holiday Inn — replete with twin pagodes perched on its facade — and my helpful friend, like almost everyone in this neighbourhood, is himself ethnic Chinese. "It was disgraceful, just disgraceful what he said," he railed this morning. "Mr Parizeau should resign. You know, we all of us have the same dream for this country; it is in our hearts and in our heads. I watched him and I felt really stunned". Mr Parizeau would have done well to have had the Chinese in Montreal on his side. They number just about 50,000, exactly the number by which the Oui side fell short in the final result (roughly the number of people to fill a good-sized football stadium).

It has been a good few days in Montreal for people inclined towards fancy-dress. Even as the city voted on Monday, the most fervent of the "Oui" and "Non" camps were out and about

flamming their convictions by way of their attire. There was Deepak Massand, who stood all day on the corner of Ste Catherine and Peel Streets downtown, dressed from head to toe in a toga made up of the federalist maple leaf and the blue fleur-de-lis of Quebec. Presumably, it kept him warm. Pacing the other side of Ste Catherine was Mario Trotter, who, as well as wearing a Frankenstein mask, brandished a cut-out coffin and crucifix bearing the message "Non au S-OUI-CHIE". Feeling off the mark to speak for a moment, he explained: "I am just trying to defend myself and defend Canada". A few passers-by responded with a one-digit gesture. "Look at them, they are saying 'I... You'", says Mario. "Well, I say..." and he blew them a kiss. Mario and Deepak were gone from Ste Catherine yesterday, to be replaced only by the costume-hall enthusiasts of Halloween. Many were looking out for the return of the walking, talking toothbrush, an annual fixture on the pavements here on 31 October.

For Canada's markets and business community, the result was the right one, if only just, and all the dark rumours of the last week can be forgotten. These included tall tales of Mr Parizeau himself arranging to have his life savings transferred to a bank in Vermont, of an American bank syndicate threatening to pull out of a loan to back up Quebec's crippling debt and of multinational companies in the province, like Air Canada and Pratt and Whitney, preparing to pull out in the event of a "Oui" victory. My own interest on election day was in a certain British retailing company with a large outlet on Ste Catherine, just a block from the toyn-clad Mr Massand. Its awnings already decked out for Christmas, Marks & Spencer beckoned like a calm sanctuary in the electoral storm. Inside were the familiar racks of socks, underpants and pyjamas and, most importantly, shelves upon shelves of luxury Christmas puddings. St Michael, you see, has not yet penetrated my normal stamping ground, New York.

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## Orphans of a dead school

Hackney Downs school should have been closed down several years ago. If ever there was a case of a school failing its pupils, this was it. Rapid staff turnover, high levels of truancy, a dilapidated building, falling school rolls, poor facilities, under-achievement and low GCSE scores have spoken for too long of an institution that was dying. It takes a long time to turn around a school that has fallen this far behind, better to start afresh.

Yesterday, Gillian Shepherd's "hit squad" - Hackney Downs Education Association - delivered the death blow, recommending that from next term the school should be abandoned and its teachers made redundant after two decades of decline that soured a century of academic glory.

The Education Secretary's storm troopers have done their work in decisive fashion. The closure will act as a warning to nearly 100 other schools that have also failed their school inspections. They now know that they had better buck up their performance or face a similar fate.

Yesterday's decision is also (conveniently for the Government) an indictment of Hackney's Labour-controlled council which, for the past five years, has been responsible for failing to check the school's slow demise. Its history of neglect and indecision has contributed to leaving the school beyond repair.

But after all the big gestures and rhetoric, the question is: what about the pupils? Many of them will receive just five years' secondary education, yet for almost as long a cloud has hung over their education. Next term, all 206 remaining pupils will again be disrupted, when they move to Homerton House School.

They will bring with them many of the social problems that made life so difficult at Hackney Downs. A high proportion of the transferred pupils had already been expelled from other schools. One in three is defined as having special needs; two-thirds do not use English as a first language. A similar proportion qualify for free school meals as a result of the low incomes received by their parents. It is also hardly reassuring that Homerton House is run by the same council that made such a mess of Hackney Downs.

So we need more from Mrs Shepherd than yesterday's scorched earth policy. Having correctly identified a bad institution and rightly closed it down, it is now up to the Education Secretary to make sure that replacement facilities are a marked improvement. By her actions, she has made herself responsible and will have to take the blame if yesterday's closure announcement does not produce greater success for pupils.

That will require resources. As Mrs Shepherd's leaked Cabinet briefing document so clearly stated in September, "insufficient resources threaten the provision of education in the state school sector". The pupils of Hackney Downs know more about this than anyone else.

A better deal for these children will also require better management than existed at Hackney Downs. It is all very well sending in inspectors to diagnose ailments in schools and even dispatching hit squads with a death sentence when an institution is too far gone. But the real test of Mrs Shepherd's watch will be maintaining continuous care of the many British schools that are so obviously in trouble.

## Body Shop gets sick of the City

Anita Roddick and Richard Branson are the business heroes of a generation. They make cash with panache. Teenagers aspire to be like them. Polls show Branson a front-running candidate should Britain go republican and need a president. We all have a soft spot for them because they stand out from a business world of smooth-shaven men in suits.

Yet our heroes are decidedly disgruntled with the British stock market. Anita is rumoured to be planning to haul the Body Shop, peppermint foot lotion, warts and all, away from the City and put it back into private ownership. In 1988, after only 18 months on the Stock Exchange, Richard Branson took his company back into the private sector. Alan Sugar has tried and failed to do the same with Amstrad.

So why do they float in the first place? From the entrepreneur's point of view there are huge advantages to floating a home-grown creation to shareholders for cash. They get ready money either for themselves or to reinvest in the business, where perhaps in the past credit was limited. Even Branson's temporary public flotation enabled him to borrow more, because his lenders had more confidence after he returned to the private sector. A flotation is a sign that the entrepreneur has made it, that others too are willing to put their money where the founder's mouth is.

But it is no bed of roses. First, the Stock Exchange requires much more frank disclosure and new shareholders want to know about future plans in order to value the shares. Not much fun for your dynamic

individual who is used to calling all the shots. If a Roddick or a Branson spies a new, exciting venture, the chances are they want to sweep in and take advantage of it, without waiting for a second opinion.

In part, then, this boils down to temperament - Branson, Sugar and Roddick simply don't like being told what to do. And perhaps it is inevitable that the kinds of people who take risks like this will always feel uncomfortable with big financial institutions breathing down their necks.

For to be fair to the City, the Body Shop has been a successful public company. The City found the money to permit rapid growth from a company worth £5m in 1984 to over £250m today. But recently, questions have arisen about the Body Shop's performance, especially in the US.

When Branson faced the second-guessing, he complained that the City was more interested in the kind of short-term profit growth delivered through acquisitions than the bold ventures Virgin was planning. This raises the question of whether the City is as good as it should be at backing the kind of risk that turns creative medium-sized companies into very large ones. The Bransons, Roddicks and Sugars do not fit easily into the short-term performance grids of the financial institutions that invest our pension contributions.

That is a pity, but we shouldn't cry over spilled jobola oil. Ms Roddick will probably thrive again back in her private domain. It's hard to avoid the conclusion, however, that the City will be a somewhat duller place.

ANOTHER VIEW Clare Short

## Don't forget Birmingham

Deeply disappointed but not surprised. That sums up my feelings and those of most other Birmingham people when we heard yesterday that the City has not been chosen as the site for the national stadium. We genuinely believed that we had the best bid - accessibility, innovative design, the potential for developing sport at every level in the community and above all a unique location. In fact the judging panel described Birmingham's bid as an excellent one, citing the city's proven track record of hosting major sporting events.

I understand that the reason given for turning down our high-quality bid was because the Birmingham site is in a green belt area. A public inquiry would be needed and it was felt that it was far from certain whether it would result in Birmingham's favour.

The National Lottery has been described as the poor paying for the pleasures of the rich. The thousands of Birmingham people who buy lottery tickets every week have so far seen little return for their cash in funds coming back to this region. My constituents in Ladywood are amongst the poorest in the country - they deserve to get something back from the lottery.

Many people in Birmingham - and indeed Sheffield and Bradford - may well ask why bother to bid at all. It is always easy to carp when you lose.

But equally Birmingham would, I

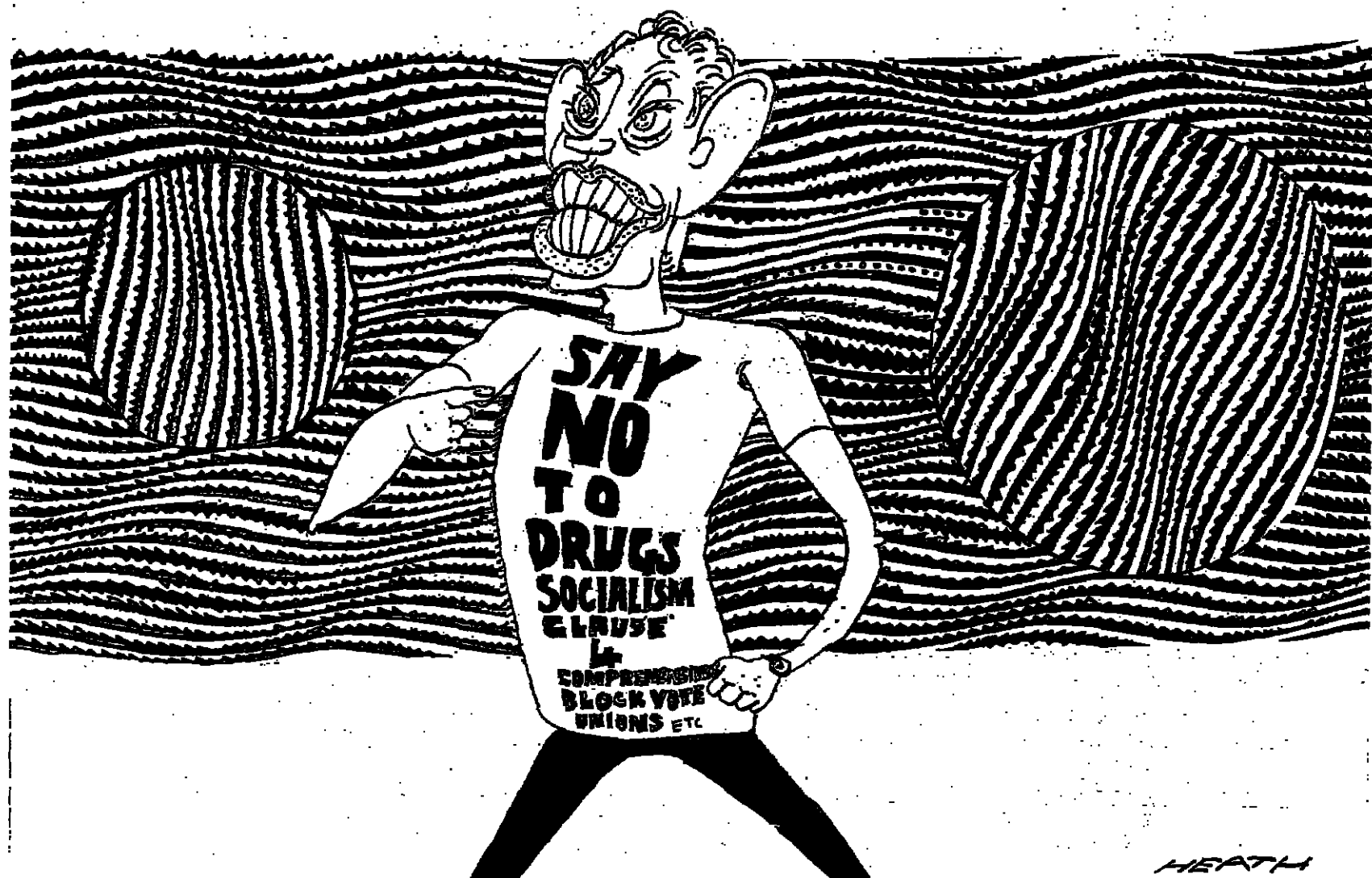
think, have been criticised if it had not made the effort to attract the stadium and the thousands of jobs it would bring to a region that has seen its traditional industries decimated over the past decade.

My work in London means I can fully appreciate the amenities of the capital city. But as a representative from outside London I also think it is damaging for the country to see prestige projects as only possible for the capital. This was obviously another reason for Birmingham to make the bid to be considered for the national stadium funds.

The national stadium steering group can point to the fact that they are now considering both London and Manchester further, and I wish both bids the best of luck. The important thing for our city is to keep its traditional resilience and I am sure that the city will not let this disappointment affect its determination to press ahead with its other major lottery bids.

I hope this setback will actually strengthen the National Exhibition Centre's campaign to become the site of the Millennium Exhibition in the year 2000 and secure support for the Millennium Campus in Digbeth just south of the city centre, a major project that would create up to 11,000 jobs.

The writer is Labour MP for Birmingham Ladywood and Shadow Transport Secretary.



## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### Wondering out loud can cause reefer madness

From Mr Robin Prior  
Sir: How strong and robust is our political system when a member of the Shadow Cabinet cannot even ask a question, let alone give an opinion ("Short says sorry as Blair reads riot act", 31 October)?

Clare Short was wondering out loud, in the most tentative terms, as to whether the question of decriminalising cannabis should be looked at. Many judges, chief constables and other commentators have done likewise. She was not making any commitment, nor advocating policy. She was certainly not saying anything new. Obviously, the view taken by Mr Blair and his spin doctors is quite different. The rights and wrongs of the issue are clearly irrelevant to them. What they are concerned with is public opinion - looking good.

More alarming, perhaps, is the kind of explanation offered by various Labour MPs trying to smooth things over. "Clare is someone who, when asked a question, will give an honest answer," one MP said yesterday. What! Is dishonesty more likely to secure a post in the Shadow

Cabinet then? Is openness a quality that is a liability to an MP these days?

I wonder what other subjects MPs are forbidden to talk about? Decriminalising prostitution? The long-term unemployed? The justice system? I know - what about: The Emperor's New Clothes? Yours sincerely, ROBIN PRIOR, London, E8 31 October

From Mr Roger Howard  
Sir: The debate about the legal status of drugs is in danger of being hijacked for moral and political capital, rather than contributing to an effective response to growing drug problems. The key issue is that the effectiveness of current laws remains untested. There is clear evidence of a growing mismatch between the extent of young people's drug use and a law that has the potential to propel them through a costly and inappropriate criminal justice system.

With drug addiction up 13 per cent in the last year alone, the effectiveness of the current balance of resources between

enforcement and control (66 per cent) and treatment, care and education (less than 32 per cent) needs reconsideration. With an independent task force reviewing the effectiveness of drug treatment and care services, the time is ripe for a matching review of the effectiveness of the legal response.

Yours faithfully, ROGER HOWARD, Chief Executive, National Drug Abuse Conference on Drug Abuse, London, SE1 30 October

From Mr B. J. Wilson  
Sir: Michael Howard may have been very satisfied to hear that David Steel's son was imprisoned for nine months for growing some cannabis plants for himself and his friends.

Perhaps we shall soon see people jailed for smoking cannabis to relieve the distressing symptoms of multiple sclerosis. This will certainly deter them. Then we will know that prison works.

Yours truly, B. J. WILSON, Bristol 30 October

### Case for the Child Support Agency

From Mr Tony Ward  
Sir: Earl Russell (Letters, 20 October) is having some difficulty in accepting that in 1994/95 the Child Support Agency saved taxpayers £479m that would otherwise have been paid in social security benefits, so I must answer the points he raised.

Included within the £479m is £199m saved in cases where a parent with care promptly withdraws their claim to income support within four weeks of specified agency action, or within eight weeks if the action relates to an investigation into the requirement to co-operate; and £24m saved in cases in which the parent with care ceased to receive income support as a direct result of the agency arranging maintenance.

In claiming these savings, the agency applies an established departmental principle, agreed with the Treasury, that a saving be claimed in all cases identified, as while some that occurred within the four- to eight-week period might not be attributable to the CSA, other savings which are

due to the agency's actions, but occurred outside this period, will not be claimed. We believe that this is likely to lead to actual savings being underestimated.

In practice it would, of course, be impossible to establish the real reasons for benefit ceasing in individual cases, as those involved in abuse of the benefit system are hardly going to admit it.

I can also assure Earl Russell, that the agency does not claim a saving in benefit for maintenance that is disregarded in assessing entitlement to Family Credit.

Overall, the CSA is proving to be a very cost-effective operation. During its first three years, if it achieves this year's target, the agency will have collected or arranged more than £500m in maintenance, and will also have saved the taxpayer £1.4bn in reduced social security expenditure. This will compare with the total three-year operating costs of running the child maintenance system of around £514m.

Yours faithfully, TONY WARD, Director of Operations, Child Support Agency, London, SW1 25 October

### UN responsibility

From Mr Farrukh Hyder  
Sir: Everyone should be held accountable for not doing a job properly. In daily life, failure to perform one's duties can often lead to the sack.

By a similar token, what can we expect from the UN following the revelation that Lieutenant-General Bernard Janvier repeatedly refused to give air support to UN troops at the time of Srebrenica's fall (front page, 30 October)?

Bearing in mind that 8,000 people died in Srebrenica, will the failure to protect this "safe area" be simply put down to the Western governments' unwillingness to act? And should those of us with a moral conscience allow the politicians off the hook and simply turn our backs on the wives and daughters and mothers of the 8,000 who died?

Yours, FARRUKH HYDER, London, SW16 31 October

### Marital tips

From Ms Linda Hepburn  
Sir: Emma Tennant's advice ("Dear Darcy and Elizabeth", 30 October) is amusing but superficial. In Chapter 61, Jane Austen tells her readers something about life after the wed-

dings. For example, Elizabeth does tease her husband and Georgina experiences "an astonishment bordering on alarm at her lively, sportive, manner of talking to her brother".

Yours faithfully, LINDA HEPBURN, Chatham, Kent

### Quebec's political conundrum

From Mr Simon Partridge  
Sir: It is clear from Alex Salmond's views on the referendum in Quebec (Another View: "Choose wisely, Quebec", 30 October) that he misunderstands the nature of the British state.

First, it is not a nation-state, it is a multi-national state and has been ever since the Act of Union with the Welsh in 1536. It would be more accurate to describe the present UK as a "unified parliamentary state" which nonetheless recognises considerable administrative and cultural autonomy, particularly in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. It is ridiculous for Mr Salmond to describe Scotland as "powerless" when it has its own legal, educational, arts and broadcasting systems, including specific arrangements for Scots Gaelic.

Second, whatever else the British state might be, it is not locked into the 19th century. As historians of nationalism such as Professor Hobshawm have shown, the idea of the "small country", and the associated principle of national self-determination, only rose to prominence in the latter part of the 19th century, and might be said to have ended in Europe in 1951 when the Treaty of Paris established the European Coal and Steel Community, the forerunner of today's European Union.

It is true that the further development of the EU towards monetary and political integration poses difficult questions of readjustment for all its member states, whether mono- or multi-national. But a little reflection shows that the "Europe of small countries", which the Scottish National Party advocates, cannot be a solution to the conundrum, for the simple reason that several of the nations are intrinsically large, for exam-

ple the French and the English. To create viable political formations for the next millennium, we now need to move beyond the late 19th and early 20th century "principle of nationality" to create accountable institutions that are, at once, larger than existing large states and smaller than small nations (whether states or not).

Given the global moves towards ever increasing urbanisation, we should probably be thinking of continent-wide confederations based primarily round cities and their attendant hinterlands. What has been called, in shorthand, the "city region solution" - in which, no doubt, Glasgow, Edinburgh, Dundee and Aberdeen would play their full part within a wider British Isles and European setting.

Yours faithfully, SIMON PARTRIDGE, London, N2 30 October

From Mr Conrad Black  
Sir: It was outrageous and irresponsible for you to lead your readers to believe that I would have voted for the secession of Quebec from Canada had I had a vote in Quebec's referendum yesterday (report, 31 October). You spiced a quote from a speech I gave at the University of Alberta last week in which I made it clear that I was strenuously opposed to the secession of Quebec but felt that, if it occurred, interesting possibilities would be opened up for English-speaking Canada as well. No honest reading of my remarks would justify your interpretation of it.

Sincerely, CONRAD BLACK, Chairman, The Telegraph, London, E14 31 October

### Ms Greer and the virginal student

From Mr Chris Whiffin  
Sir: Thank you Germaine Greer ("Young, free, virginal and not a dork", 27 October) for making me realise that I am not alone. In a world increasingly dominated by sex, I always feel slightly isolated in not leading a life centred around the subject. For a teenager, it is difficult to judge what role sex plays in adult lives, but our culture seems to propagate the image that everyone is dominated by it.

This is further amplified by television and books. Romance is central to Jane Austen's books unless you are, like Mary Bennet, a dork (which I like to believe I am not). Modern television programmes about teenagers, like *Byker Grove* and *Hollyoaks*, further exacerbate this image.

Although I am not an identikit of the student in Germaine Greer's article, there are a number of similarities. I spend much of my spare time with my close friends and the issue of sex, especially as we grow further away from puberty, is not central, although it is occasionally mentioned. Some of my friends are interested in the opposite sex;

but, as her article suggests, they want stable relationships, not the one-off gratifications that seem to dominate much of society. Others, though, are not concerned with sexual conquests at present, but marriage as a future possibility is not ruled out.

Yours faithfully, CHRIS WHIFFIN, Heavitree, Devon 28 October

From Mr Andrew Buck  
Sir: I have been unable to stop laughing ever since I read Germaine Greer's column last Friday. I cannot get out of my head the vision of a panic-stricken, newly qualified, young and gauche physician, totally unprepared by any of his teachers in the clinical art of dealing with a sex-mad Australian quizzing him about whether he wears a condom, when he does it, how often he does it, and so on and so forth. Worse, the poor sod was locked in a speeding motor-car with his questioner all the way to Cambridge. God, what a nightmare!

Mind you, from the account, I thought he managed very well in the end.

Yours sincerely, ANDREW BUCK, Halifax 28 October

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# Sorry Reynard, it's a human right to hunt

Foxes may see Tony Blair as a friend, but Labour is in danger of trespassing on a traditional freedom

Tally ho! Yoicks and jorrock! Today sees the opening of the hunting season. The sabs are dusting down their anoraks, the hunters their boots, as a new round of bloody counterpoint begins. Both sides had better get the most fun out of it they can, for this could be one of the last hunting seasons ever.

As the hounds' breath steams in the misty autumn air and the MFH drains land is on the hoof again, galloping across the country, in the scenes that grace the plastic table-mats of a thousand country pubs. Some 20,000 foxes will be torn apart by ravening hounds. Whether it is pity for the foxes or class hatred of the toffs, 70 to 80 per cent of the public tell pollsters that they want it banned, and so does Labour. The British Field Sports Society offers a heap of statistics in support of their bloody pleasures: more than 30,000 are employed in hunting-related work, and would lose their jobs; 75 per cent of farmers would instruct (why they have a right to "instruct" I don't know) their MP to vote against any change in hunting laws; more people than ever take part in hunting, 250,000 last year; direct expenditure on blood sports (sport, country sports, like country-fresh eggs) exceeds £1.4bn, though this is a weasel figure as it includes fishing. The countryside is conserved, with copses, spinneys and hedgerows created expressly for covers and jumps. Traditional farmers, saddlers and harness-makers are kept in business. Somewhat spuriously, they claim all this ritual is in aid of pest control.

Against them is the newly invigorated 70-year-old League Against Cruel Sports, which now sees its prey within millimetres of its slavering jaws. A Private Members' Bill to ban hunting and other cruelty was introduced by the Labour MP John McFall, (who also attempted to deliver a petition to Downing Street dressed as a fox, but was barred "in order to maintain the dignity of the street and its surroundings"). As the Bill proceeded, £750,000 of anti-hunting advertising, paid for by a host of animal charities, deluged the press. MPs each received hundreds of pro-forma letters from constituents (most were duplicated coupons torn out of newspapers.)

The Bill was in committee yesterday. Without government time it will fail, but it has concentrated the minds of both sides as the prospect of a Labour government draws nearer. A new group of Labour-supporting hunters, Leave Country Sports Alone, headed by Baroness Mallett and John and Penny Mortimer, inserted a controversial pro-hunting leaflet into last December's *Labour Party News*, which caused an outcry. Banning hunting has adorned every Labour manifesto since 1979. Tony Blair sent out a host of letters answered in his name in response to angry Labour Party members: "Mr Blair was not consulted in advance about the insertion of this particular leaflet and as a consequence of this, he has ordered a review of the procedures... The position of the Labour Party on this issue is firm. A Labour government will make parliamentary time available for a free vote on the abolition of fox-



POLLY TOYNEEBE

We are less cruel to foxes over their lifetime than we are to chickens

hunting, deer-hunting and hare-courting with dogs. Tony Blair's position is that he is opposed to these forms of hunting and he would vote for their abolition."

Polls of MPs indicate that on a free vote the House of Commons would ban hunting by a narrow majority. If Labour wins the next election, many more anti-hunters will be returned.

Good people of the left have always been anti-hunting, anti-hanging and anti-harassing gays (as if these things had anything in common), along with anti-foxing and pro-cannabis. These are the bonding issues that bleed the membership of the *bien pensant*, all of them involving fundamental questions of rights in a society with no Bill of Rights. But rights also involve giving rights to people to do things you do not like, and would not want to do yourself. Personally, I am no more

likely to ride to hounds than to buy a ticket for a folk-dancing festival or a wrestling match. But I have no wish to stop other people enjoying these curious pursuits. I am not consumed with class hatred of the hunters, nor am I particularly shocked by humans engaging in blood lust as a sport. I feel no greater pity for foxes than for the millions of battery chickens we eat every day, whose life is undoubtedly worse. And I would miss the breathtaking spectacle of the hunt chasing across the skyline.

Rights, say the animal lobbyists? What about the rights of foxes? But animals have no rights. Rights are human attributes, linked to responsibilities, derived from social contracts between fellow human beings. Rights only exist where there is a two-way moral obligation. (Some huntsmen absurdly point to the fox's sadistic pleasure in profligately killing scores of lambs or fowl for fun, as if this "immorality" were a justification for humans killing foxes for sport. But this is a very silly anthropomorphic argument, since nothing a fox does is either good or bad; he is neither an "innocent" victim nor a "guilty" killer.)

We have some obligation as moral beings not to be gratuitously cruel to animals. Personally, I don't much like the killing of foxes, but since I think we are less cruel to foxes over their lifetime than we are to chickens, or most farm animals that end up in abattoirs, only vegans have a coherent position on hunting. On a points system of cruelty, taken over a whole lifetime, we are probably far crueler to farm animals than foxes, despite their

bloody end. The fact that foxes are inedible makes no difference, since we only eat meat for pleasure - lentils and stoppers do just as well or better. Presumably, new Labour is not going to ban meat.

No, it is not the hunting that Labour would ban, but the hunters. They want to remove the right of a certain upper class of person to enjoy themselves. For instance, they would allow packs of hounds on foot in upland areas to flush out foxes for (humble) farmers to shoot as pest control, but not (posh) hunting on horseback.

What other social groups who engage in arguably inhumane methods of animal slaughter would Labour dare to ban? We know they have reassured the millions of anglers with a ridiculous Charter for Anglers. But what about kosher butchers? Or halal meat merchants? They wouldn't dare, and anyway it wouldn't be such fun. Labour can reverently invoke the hallowed right of people to practise their religion. But for non-believers, or indeed animals, human religion merits no more respect than the right to enjoy sport. Sport certainly inspires as much passion: read Surtees and Sassoon for obsessional enthusiasm.

If Labour were to make hunting a criminal offence, it would trespass on the rights of a small, if eccentric, bunch of people. It would also signify something sinister at the heart of new Labour that ought to send out sharp warning signals either it displays an authoritarian mentality that doesn't understand rights, or it betrays a deep cynicism in wooing the animal rights vote at any cost.

# Ode to mud and sodden bonfires

A recent study showed that if John Keats had lived his short lifespan today, training under modern NHS conditions, he would never have had time to write any poetry at all.

Actually, there never was any such study. I made that up. But it doesn't undercut my basic point, which is that today's junior hospital doctors don't have time to produce great poetry. I challenge you to name one junior hospital doctor currently writing great poetry, especially one suffering from a lung condition who is scheduled to die at the age of 27. Nobody? I think that proves my point.

Anyway, there is nothing wrong in making things up. Keats did it all the time.

Remember what he said about autumn? All about the season of mists and mellow fruitfulness? Conspiring with the sun "how to load and bless/With fruit the vines that round the thatch-eaves run."

Beloney! If you did a study on what autumn is like, you would have established one thing at least: autumn is rarely like that. Keats should have got out a bit more! Autumn is all about mud, and damp, and sodden bonfires that won't get started on 5 November, and cars that won't get started in the morning, and children who lie abed until nearly schooltime, and the evenings fair drawing in, and forgetting to give the lawn its last cut and forgetting to put the lawn mower in for its winter overhaul.

OK, I give you mists. There are mists around in the autumn. Keats got one thing right. But mellow fruitfulness? Conspiring to load the vines? Not in a hundred years!

My neighbour has a vine that grows picturesquely over her wall (no thatch-eaves) and into my front yard, and right now it is loaded with grapes which she never comes round to pick. Do you know why she doesn't? (And why I do not nick any of them as they dangle temptingly by my car door?) Because she knows (and I know) that they will be inedible. Grapes grown outdoors in England go straight from the interesting baby stage to the toothless granny stage without any attractive maturity in between, unless they are growing indoors or in vineyards, and even then the outcome is not particularly hopeful. Nothing mellow or fruitful about them, I fear.

I think I heard this line about mellow fruitfulness being quoted on Radio 4's *Today* programme yesterday, as if it were true, and I think I also heard someone say that a thing of beauty is a joy forever. Another famous line from Keats. It is also another

untruth. There are very, very few things which remain beautiful. The only constant rule is that people's ideas of beauty change. If Keats had written that a thing of beauty is a joy for 50 years, or maybe 100, or - in the case of actresses and supermodels - about seven years, it would be much nearer the truth.

Unfortunately, it wouldn't be poetry. Poetry is concerned a lot with feelings and beauty. It isn't concerned much with the truth.

I have a lingering feeling that H.L. Mencken may have been right on this matter. H.L. Mencken was of the opinion that poetry and the truth were opposed to each other, and that a lot of what sounded true when written poetically clearly turned out to be bunkum when written out in the superior medium of prose. The two examples he gave, as I remember, were:

God's in his heaven,



MILES KINGSTON

All's well with the world  
And I am the master of my fate  
I am the captain of my soul.  
They both have a good ring, he said, but if you think about either statement for five seconds you can see it is the denial of the truth.

The trouble is that poetry is a young man's game, and most poetry is written by young people short of 30, so it contains young men's ideas, that is to say, no very great ideas at all, only some delightful sounds.

"Poetry," said Mencken, succumbing to the temptation to define it, "is a comforting piece of fiction set to more or less lascivious music." Wait till people grow up a bit and get out of poetry into something grown-up like prose, that was his feeling.

"I have been told," wrote Mencken, "that the average age of the men who made the Authorised Version of the Bible was beyond 60 years. Had they been under 30 they would have made it lyrical; as it was, they made it colossal."

I have just remembered that I set out today to examine why John Keats, although medically trained, is always referred to as John Keats and not Dr Keats, whereas Ian Paisley, who seems trained for nothing in particular, calls himself Dr Paisley. Tomorrow, I hope.

Critics who complain that the capital gets too much lottery money are wrong, says Terence Conran

# London deserves to get lucky

Against significant odds, London remains a world-class city. Unlike New York or Paris or Sydney - indeed, unlike Manchester or Edinburgh or Bristol - it has no co-ordinated governing body. Emancipated by its lack of leadership, London struggles to initiate new schemes that will keep it at the forefront of world culture. This is a battle that the UK, as well as London, has to win - a point that is lost on the carpers who complain that London has received more than its fair share of lottery grants.

As the capital city, London is the focus of attention from other countries around the world. It is the centre not just of national government,

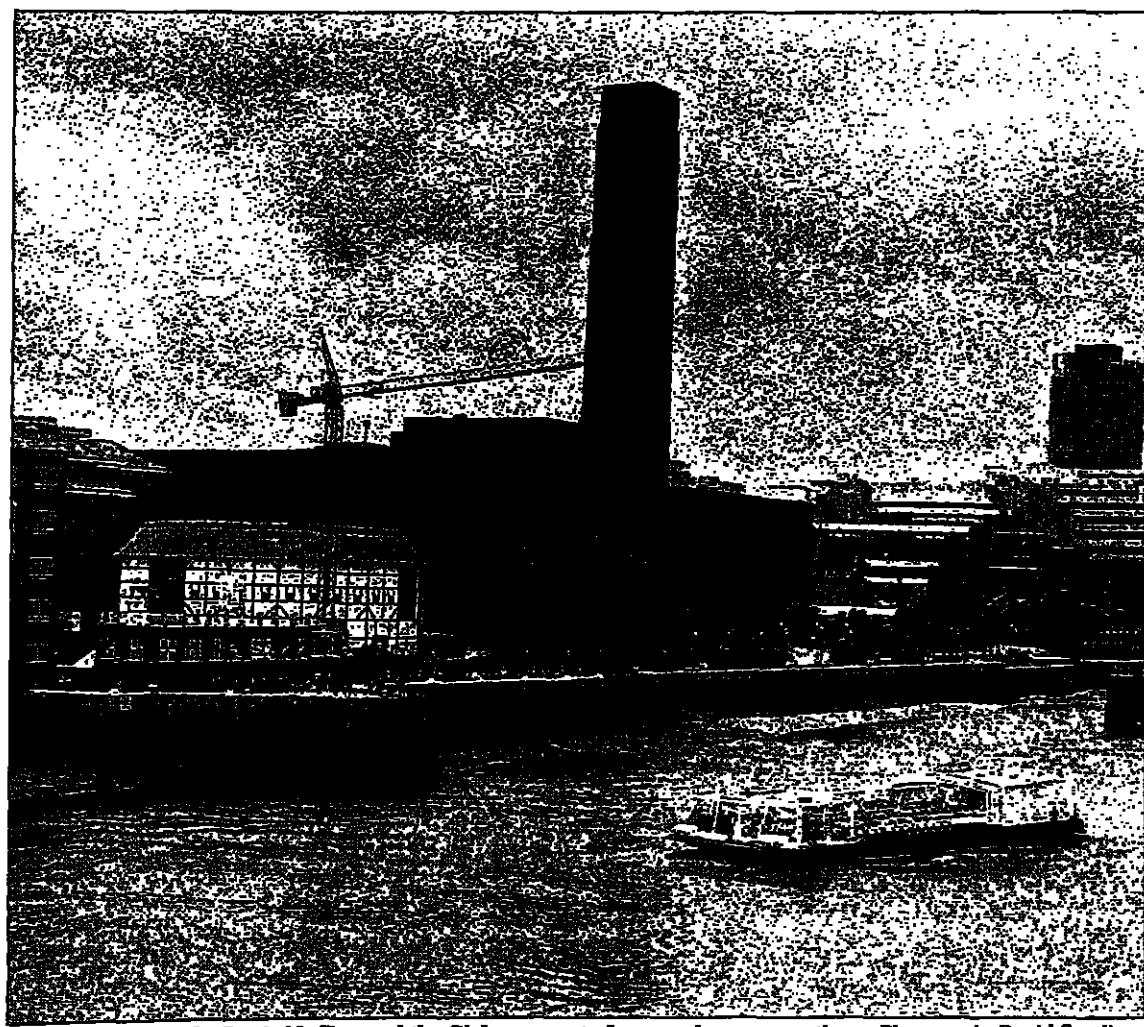
Our capital city has to be as good as possible, for the enrichment of all our lives

but of finance, the arts and entertainment. The capital's reputation as a centre of excellence for its sporting facilities, its built heritage and the performing and visual arts is vital for the success with which it attracts both visitors and businesses from overseas. Once here, the money spent by these tourists and invested by these businesses benefits the country as a whole: by the tourists who visit other parts of the country, and by the jobs created by overseas companies, whose employees will not restrict their spending to the capital. If London fails, I believe the whole country fails.

A significant reason, I would argue, why Frankfurt seems to have lost its bid to become the financial centre of Europe is that the city is so dreary that nobody really wants to work there. Imagine the fate of the country as a whole were London to become so bleak that major financial institutions relocated. And make no mistake, they wouldn't relocate to another part of the UK; it would be to Paris or to Berlin or to New York.

So, if London gets it wrong, there is not much hope for the rest of the country. Our capital city has to be as good as it possibly can be, for the good as it possibly can be, for the good as it possibly can be, for the good as it possibly can be, for the good as it possibly can be.

The National Lottery gives me cause for anxiety on a number of fronts. As a pernicious and insidious tax levied disproportionately on the poor to subsidise the leisure activities



South bank show: the Bankside Tate and the Globe are part of an overdue regeneration Photograph: David Sandison

of the rich - which is how the distribution thus far has been popularly received - it is a massive con trick. Following the fiasco of the Channel 4 papers, one might have expected the distributors to act more sensitively than to announce a £55m award to the Royal Opera House. It was, as the *Daily Mirror* headline screamed, just "too too much". But it's the timing I take issue with - not the award. I am equally dismayed that the five distributing bodies oversee what the Government terms "good causes", as if our heritage, the arts and sport were not central to the quality of all our lives. Funds currently exceed the projected figures; but what happens in the future if they start falling off? The Government seems quite intent on using lottery money to release it from the necessity of adequate funding.

However, the money exists, and it

is essential to see that it is spent wisely. As such, I don't believe that the awards made to London are inappropriate. As we approach the millennium, one of the most exciting and long-overdue developments seems to be under way: the regeneration of London south of the Thames.

Southwark Council does not enjoy the rosiest of relationships with the press. It presides over a borough in which unemployment runs at about 25 per cent and which includes areas of appalling dereliction and neglect. Yet the council has been fundamental in pushing for - and winning - bids for lottery funding for the Globe Theatre (£12.4m), the Tate Museum of Modern Art on Bankside (£50m) and a temporary home for the Royal Opera (not to mention a small chefs' training school in Butlers Wharf). Taken alone, these projects will generate employment and raise the pro-

file of the south bank of the Thames. But there will, I hope and believe, be a ripple effect that leads to the regeneration of areas beyond the riverside. If funding is given to the Richard Rogers scheme to enclose the South Bank Centre in glass, we will finally begin to redress the current imbalance between London north and south of the Thames.

Cities such as Birmingham, Liverpool and Glasgow serve as regional centres of excellence. But they are never going to overtake London in terms of international reputation. If London does not continue to be the focus of cultural excellence, the country as a whole will suffer. That London maintained a reputation for being the home of some of the best art collections in the world is extraordinary given how long we have been without a museum of modern art. It would be

wholly inappropriate for the Tate Gallery to have considered housing this part of its collection in another part of the UK. As it is, the choice of the Bankside power station and the inspired commissioning of Herzog and de Mueron as architects will, I hope, have a similar effect on a currently neglected part of the capital as the Pompidou Centre had on Beaubourg in Paris.

The scheme is an ambitious one, but it is also long overdue. The museum is not a luxury but a necessity, and the award from the Millennium Commission provides the means to its success. When the museum finally opens, it will enrich

A museum of modern art for London is not a luxury, it is a necessity

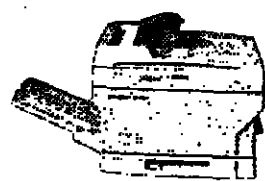
the lives of everyone who visits it, regardless of where they live. It will provide the country with a proper venue for the understanding of many of the major cultural and political events of the 20th century: a cultural, educational and democratic forum for art.

Making our art and sporting venues accessible to all is a vital consideration. To the accusations of elitism, I would point to the Royal Opera's search for sponsors of its prom seasons; to the Sadler's Wells Theatre's reputation as an exciting and populist modern dance venue; to the enthusiasm with which the Globe Theatre wants to promote live performance. London's centres of excellence also provide the training ground for many people who then go on to share their expertise in other parts of the country.

It may be the ultimate irony that public subsidy - in the form of lottery funding - finally succeeds where beloved market forces so miserably failed: the regeneration of the Docklands. If it takes lottery money to ensure that London welcomes in the next millennium as a world class city with world class facilities, then so be it. Many of the capital's museums, galleries, theatres and sporting arenas are in urgent need of modernisation. If they fall into irrevocable disrepair, we will all suffer as the creative and sporting talent in this country follows the money, the tourists and the businesses to other shores.

by Tony Reeve and Steve Way

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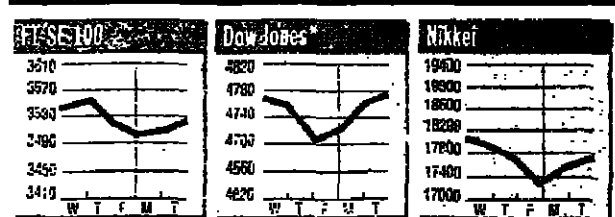
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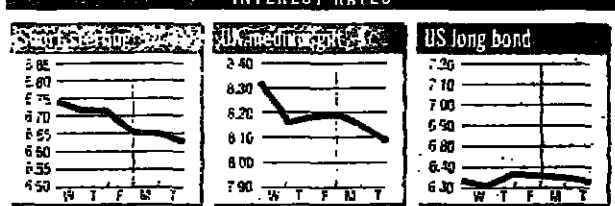
Index	Close	Day's change	Change (%)	12 Mth High	12 Mth Low	Yield (%)
FTSE 100	3529.1	+19.1	+0.5	3593.0	2943.4	4.0
FTSE 250	3394.3	+11.8	+0.3	3391.3	3300.9	3.5
FTSE 350	1755.9	+8.5	+0.5	1785.3	1477.0	3.9
FT All-Share	1940.5	-0.3	-0.0	1993.1	1678.6	3.4
New York	4789.7	+32.2	+0.7	4814.7	3674.6	2.4
Tokyo	17654.6	+145.5	+0.8	19916.5	14485.4	0.8
Hong Kong	9782.4	+110.0	+1.1	10032.9	6967.9	3.3
Frankfurt	2157.9	+21.8	+1.0	2317.0	1911.0	2.0
Paris	1914.0	+18.7	+1.0	2017.3	1721.1	3.7
Milan	3346.0	+138.0	+4.1	3911.0	2912.0	2.7

\*New Jones at 1400 hours, New Jones graph at 1330 hours

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Rises	Falls
Body Shop Int'l 156 21 15.6	Bryant Group 98 6 5.8
Pilkington 189 7 3.9	Babcock Int'l 167 5 2.9
Wapac 376 15 3.6	Wimpey (George) 102 3 2.9
Schroders 1346 42 3.3	Courtauld 387 11 2.8
Schroders NV 1110 35 3.3	Sedgwick Group 106 3 2.8

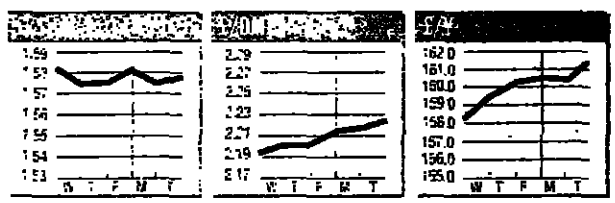
## INTEREST RATES



Index	1 Month	3 Month	6 Month	1 Year	2 Year	3 Year	Long Bond	(%)	Yield
UK	6.66	6.75	6.81	6.72	8.20	8.55			
US	5.75	5.72	6.03	7.80	8.35	7.95			
Japan	0.56	0.69	2.96	4.03	3.83	5.01			
Germany	4.06	4.00	6.49	7.56	7.19	7.97			

\*Benchmark indices

## CURRENCIES



Pound	Yesterday	Change	Year Ago	Dollar	Yesterday	Change	Year Ago
\$ (London)	1.5798	+0.35c	1.6395	£ (London)	0.6330	-0.14	0.6133
\$ (New York)	1.5815	+0.50c	1.6412	£ (New York)	0.6333	-0.20	0.6136
DM (London)	2.2350	+0.75p	2.4583	DM (New York)	1.4075	+0.12p	1.5077
Yen (London)	161.46	+10.15	158.09	Yen (New York)	102.22	+10.66	98.95
£ Index	84.0	+0.2	85.8	£ Index	93.0	-0.1	93.1

\*New York rates and 01 Dec 1995 at 1400 hours

## OTHER INDICATORS

	Yesterday	Day's chg	Year Ago		Index	Latest	Yr Ago	Next Figs
Oil Brent \$	16.35	+50.08	17.20	RPI	150.6	3.9pc	2.4	16 Nov
Gold \$	382.75	+50.50	384.50	GDP	106.6	2.4pc	4.1	20 Nov
Gold £	242.28	+10.22	235.62	Base Rate	—	6.75pc	5.25	—

Source: Datastream

## IN BRIEF

## Eurotunnel fails in £2.6bn claim

Eurotunnel has failed in a £2.6bn claim against the British and French railways for delays and extra costs imposed on the tunnel operators by the train companies. The International Chamber of Commerce, which acted as arbitrator in the case, dismissed a call by Eurotunnel for a renegotiation of its 1987 contract with SNCF and British Rail. Eurotunnel wanted a 55 per cent increase in annual payments from the rail operators plus a payment of £3bn, or alternatively a one-off payment of £2.6bn. The company said it was disappointed, but added that the decision did not affect its other claims against TransManche Link, the tunnel builder, and against the British and French governments. The ICC agreed to look further into a smaller claim by Eurotunnel for compensation for late entry into service of the Eurostar trains belonging to the rail companies.

## Dollar and bonds weather US pick-up

The dollar and US bonds took the latest US data in their stride. The Chicago Purchasing Managers' index of manufacturing rose from 49 to 53.4 in October, signalling that manufacturing was picking up. However, the markets focused on the weakening in the employment component. New homes sales rose 3 per cent last month to an annual rate of 727,000 from a revised 704,000 in August. This was the fourth consecutive month in which the annual sales rate exceeded 700,000. However, the Conference Board reported that consumer confidence retreated to 97 in October, lower than expected in the markets, from a revised 97.3 in September.

## £125m value put on Vero Group

Vero Group, a £33m management buyout last year from cables group BICC, will be valued at around £125m when it comes to the stock market this month. Today's prospectus is expected to show that six founder directors, led by managing director Brian Gray, will end up with a stake worth around £16m and, along with 36 other senior management, are set to raise roughly £3m in cash. Shares in the group, a maker of cabinets and racks for the electronics industry, are expected to be priced at between 200p and 225p, suggesting a prospective price/earnings ratio of 16.8 with underlying pre-tax profits forecast at £11.1m for this year.

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## Vernons gives 150 more the boot

A further 150 jobs are being lost at Vernons, the football pools company owned by Ladbrokes. The company again blames the job cuts, which follow 125 made earlier this year, on the loss of business caused by the National Lottery. The latest redundancies include 75 people at N&B Direct, its printing works, which will be closed.

## Nintendo approach 'garbage', says BCE

Computer game developer BCE Holdings dismissed as "garbage" weekend suggestions that it had received a takeover bid from the Japanese games giant, Nintendo. Managing director Robin Jones said: "Nintendo have never bought a developer and I don't think they ever will."

## Norcross loses on disposals

Building group Norcross said it will make an £11.6m loss on the disposal of Norcross Windows, Critical Windows and ED Hinchliffe and Sons.

## Lloyd's names win legal victory

JOHN EISENHAMMER  
Financial Editor

Loss-making Lloyd's names were celebrating a landmark High Court victory against auditors yesterday which could produce massive damages awards.

The judgment also boosted the prospects of an overall solution to the troubles at Lloyd's of London by dramatically increasing the pressure on auditors to make a substantial contribution to the global settlement to the names in exchange for them dropping all litigation against the market.

John Mays, chairman of Merrett syndicate 418 names' action group said he expected the

damages to total £300m. "This is a stunning victory. If we had written the judgment ourselves we could not have done it better," he said. Syndicate members include such well known personalities as Rocco Forte, Major Ronald Ferguson, father of the Duchess of York, Adam Faith, the former pop star, Sir Nicholas Lyell, the Attorney General and Ted Dexter, the cricketer.

Ernst & Whinney, now part of Ernst & Young, was found to have been negligent in auditing the Merrett syndicate 418 during three years in the early Eighties. Merrett is the first big Lloyd's case to involve auditors as well as the controversial asbestos and pollution policies in

the US, which, because of retrospective legislation, began in the late Seventies to land names with ruinous losses.

Mr Justice Creswell found all four defendants, Stephen Merrett himself, the Merrett company, the managing agents and the auditors, guilty of negligence in failing to take proper account of the risks inherent in these US pollution and asbestos liabilities. Mr Merrett, a former deputy chairman of Lloyd's and long-serving member of the society's council, was also found to have deliberately concealed significant information from names.

The judge said he had "serious reservations about many aspects of Mr Merrett's evidence and serious reservations

about his approach as underwriter", adding that Merrett accounts for 1982 contained "a mixture of truth, half-truths and falsehood".

Mr Mays said: "This is devastating criticism of Merrett, and in criticising him the judge is criticising the entire old guard at Lloyd's of which Merrett was an integral part."

The judge's findings of deceit and cover-ups by such a formerly eminent member of Lloyd's are expected to fuel efforts by US lawyers, in particular, to seek damages from the insurance market.

Rejecting names' claims for the three preceding years, Mr Justice Creswell found that there had been negligence in the

underwriting and auditing of the insurance years 1982, 1983 and 1984. He found the Merrett syndicate to have been negligent on 11 counts when it took on the re-insurance of other syndicates' US pollution and asbestos liabilities.

These were big policies and Mr Merrett was in effect taking a bet against the market that the liabilities would turn out to be less than supposed. In the event, with inadequate cover of its own, they brought ruin to names.

The auditors were criticised for not getting the additional information that should have persuaded them to withhold their unconditional approval for these years' accounts. Instead,

the Merrett syndicate was allowed to "close" these years, implying that it was certain it had sufficient coverage for all potential losses, and allowing it to recruit unsuspecting new names who suddenly found themselves liable for huge losses.

Ernst & Young yesterday said it would probably appeal, and stressed that the Merrett judgment, because of its particular circumstances, had no implications for other Lloyd's cases the auditor faces. Nick Land, senior partner at Ernst, said names' estimates of their potential damages were exaggerated, should an appeal fail. "Any reasonable assessment is likely to put our contribution below £20m", he said.

### Private plans: Analysts confused over Anita and Gordon Roddick's reported move to regain control

## Body Shop admits talks on buy-back

NIGEL COPE

Body Shop International, the environmentally conscious retail group, admitted last night that it has held talks with founders Anita and Gordon Roddick over a plan by them to take the company back into private ownership.

However, the board said the Roddicks had made it clear that no such proposal by them is expected to be made in the near future, if at all.

One retail analyst said last night: "It's a bit of a mess. It seems the Roddicks have expressed an interest and then backed off." The Roddicks, who own 24 per cent of the group, were believed to be in advanced talks with bankers to raise funds for a bid that would give them back control. The move would have created a company able to make more donations to charitable causes.

Morgan Stanley, the investment bank which is advising the Roddicks, declined to comment yesterday. However, it is understood that the Roddicks were prepared to offer less than 200p compared with yesterday's closing price of 156p, up 21p. An offer at 175p would value the company at £332m. The offer was due to be launched two weeks ago along with the company's interim results but was delayed by problems raising sufficient funding. Body Shop issued a statement

yesterday saying it had not received a proposal from the Roddicks to take the company private. It said the Roddicks had advised the board that no such proposal in the future is expected to be made in the future, if at all.

However, the company admitted that preliminary discussions on a share buy-back had taken place.

The company's handling of the Roddick proposal met with an angry reaction in the City, which criticised the group for failing to supply investors with sufficient information.

One institutional investor said: "It is not very satisfactory and we are not very happy. We have so far heard nothing from the company but are expecting to be contacted today. We do not feel shareholders have sufficient information to make an informed judgement."

The speculation also surprised City analysts, who felt that Body Shop was adapting to life as a public company. It has appointed new non-executive

directors and made other management changes.

The speculation over the future ownership of the company comes at an awkward time for the group. It has been ex-

periencing difficult trading in the US due to fierce competition. Last month Body Shop announced a 26 per cent drop in profits to £9m in the six months to August. The US business

slumped into a £2.4m loss. John Richards, stores analyst at NatWest Securities, said: "If this time next year the American business is still causing problems then this could mean store closures and write-offs. That would make 175p appear quite a good offer. But if the performance there does not improve then it might look cheap."

Two other companies also announced plans to return to the private sector yesterday. Le Creuset, the manufacturer of upmarket saucepans, said the chairman, Paul van Zuydam, was seeking funding to buy out the interest of minority share-

holders. Mr van Zuydam already controls 74 per cent of the company.

Explaining its decision the company said it did not feel it had derived any benefits from its USM listing since 1989. With the USM set to disappear by the end of next year, the board had decided its interest would not be best served by moving up to the main market or by listing on the new alternative investment market.

Frank G Gates, the car dealership, said it was considering returning the company to private control.

Comment, page 21



Share recycling: Anita Roddick and her husband Gordon were believed to be in advanced bid talks with bankers

## Thames douses talk of London Electricity buy

MARY FAGAN

Industrial Correspondent

Thames Water yesterday confirmed plans for cost-saving co-operation with London Electricity but put paid to long-running speculation that the companies plan to merge.

Mike Hoffman, chief executive, said a takeover of London would not be in the interests of shareholders and had not been contemplated "in any depth". In a high-profile kick-off to the water sector's reporting season, Thames also rejected calls by the watchdog, Ofwat, to commit to sharing between customers and shareholders any efficiency gains over and above those assumed when price controls are set.

Mr Hoffman said regulators "should not get involved" in the dividend plans of the compa-

nies. David Luffrum, group finance director, said: "We do intend to outperform the assumptions made and on the whole we believe that those benefits will be shared with customers. We do not intend to get locked into a mechanism or formula that shares our out-performance with customers."

He was speaking as Thames announced a 12 per cent increase in the interim dividend to 9.2p and predicted a similar rate of improvement for the full year. Pre-tax profits rose by 10 per cent to £165m in the six months to 30 September and earnings per share grew by 7 per cent to 39.3p.

Thames shares rose 6p to 427p while those in London Electricity fell by 18p to 902p. Ofwat said it was "very disappointed" at Thames's attitude. A spokeswoman for the

regulator said: "The dividend is high and they have made no commitment to benefit-sharing with the customer. We have also asked them to explain fully to customers the basis on which the dividend payout is made and we will continue to put pressure on the companies on both those fronts."

Mr Hoffman said the "high-level" discussions with London Electricity covered areas including customer services and meter-reading. Many of the potential benefits were "information technology-related and will not come overnight."

Mr Hoffman said Thames Water's overseas expansion plans had begun to bear fruit and that the international business should be making a profit within about two years. It has large projects in Turkey, Malaysia, Thailand and China.

## Byatt warns on leakage costs

MARY FAGAN

Industrial Correspondent

Ian Byatt, the water industry watchdog, attacked proposals for mandatory targets for cutting leakage from water pipes, saying that customers could end up paying. He warned that new legal obligations on companies could force the regulator to take the costs into account in setting the industry's price controls.

The plans for legal obligations on water leakage are set out in a Bill introduced yesterday by Helen Jackson, Labour MP for Sheffield Hillsborough. Mr Byatt, who has been backing widespread pres-

sure for increased spending on leaks at the expense of the companies, said: "This Bill could have the effect of making customers pay."

He also pointed out that leakage was hard to measure accurately and had to be estimated by the industry. Mr Byatt believes that a legal crackdown on leaks would "create incentives to distort" the figures reported by the sector.

The problem of leakage - which in parts of the country is about 25 per cent - was highlighted during water shortages brought on by the recent drought. The industry has already agreed to try to reduce leakage to about 15 per cent,

which could cost an estimated £4bn.

Mr Byatt said: "Companies should set themselves demanding targets and bear the costs of leakage reduction. If they fail to make progress, and where domestic supplies are withdrawn or interrupted during hot weather, then, as the Bill suggests, companies should pay a suitably high level of compensation to their customers. This would be a powerful incentive on companies to reduce leakage."

The watchdog also criticised the Bill for failing to recognise the role that metering could play in cutting use of water in hoses and sprinklers.

## Crest well on line for launch in July 1996

JOHN WILLCOCK

Financial Correspondent

Two and a half years after the collapse of the Taurus automated share settlement system, its replacement, Crest, is on budget and on schedule to go live on 15 July next year, Crest said yesterday.

The London Stock Exchange was forced to scrap Taurus at an estimated cost to the City of more than £400m after disastrous delays and cost over-runs, and development of a replacement was subsequently handed to the Bank of England.

Peter Rawlings, the Exchange's chief executive at the time, was forced to resign over the Taurus debacle. He later claimed he had foreseen the problems with the system.

Yesterday the Bank executive put in charge of CrestCo, Iain Saville, said: "We have always promised the market that Crest will be inaugurated in the third quarter of 1996."

"I am delighted that we can now give the market a firm date at the beginning of the third quarter. The project remains, as it always has been, on time and on budget."

Under Crest, paper share certificates used in the current Talisman system will be "dematerialised" - that is, replaced by an electronic system using rolling settlement rather than the traditional account structure.

The Bank of England set up CrestCo to design and build the system over a three-year period. CrestCo has spent £12m so far and has 69 shareholders.

## finance & legal

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See pages 13 - 19 section two

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Many privately owned companies in Britain are tempted on to the stock market only to find the harsh glare of the City an uncomfortable experience

## Roddick loses stomach for perils of the public

Inability to cope with the disciplines of a stock market quote seems to be a condition common to entrepreneurs of the managerial, artistic, bohemian and obstinate variety. In no particular order those who have gone public only to regret it and attempt to withdraw include Richard Branson, Alan Sugar and Andrew Lloyd Webber. To the genre of stock market misfits must now be added Anita Roddick, who seems finally to have had enough of those she has long liked to call "merchant bankers".

The Body Shop has been a fabulous investment for those who bought at the time of the float eleven years ago, but of late both the company and its share price have lost their lustre. For a company that prides itself on such a neat, freshly-scrubbed image, it is looking a bit of a mess. It is as if a bottle of brightly coloured joba cream has suddenly exploded in its face.

Though the company is stubbornly denying that Anita and Gordon Roddick have made any formal offer to buy the company back, it is clear that such a proposal did get at least some way down the line and may be revived. Bankers had been hired and a potential buyback price arrived at. That the couple should consider such a proposal is not surprising. Body Shop's 11 years as a quoted company has not been entirely harmonious. Price earnings ratios and saving the rain forests have never been easy bedfellows. Nor

has Mrs Roddick's quintessentially feminine style of business gone down well in some quarters of the male dominated City. Perhaps the only surprising thing is that it hasn't happened sooner.

There is a recurring theme here. Once they reach a certain size, many privately-owned companies in Britain are tempted on to the stock market only to find the harsh glare of the City an uncomfortable experience. Flotation provides access to capital markets as well as status and personal wealth for the founders. But it also brings with it a requirement for greater disclosure. Those quirky hobby businesses are frowned upon, as is paying yourself in oil paintings or unduly mixing your own and the public company's affairs. It also puts previously unknown demands on the organisation. The freedom becomes subject not just to the rule of the boss, but to those of outside investors too.

For the highly ambitious entrepreneur, keen to grow by acquisition, a public quote is essential. For those who want nothing more than to watch their business grow organically, it may be inappropriate. One of the primary reasons for the Virgin float was to allow Richard Branson to realise his dream of taking over EMI. In the heady days of the 80s a reverse takeover of this sort seemed more than possible. When it eventually became apparent that it was not, Mr Branson rapidly ended what he admitted was a far from happy relationship with the City.

The stock market is no prerequisite to success in business. Mrs Roddick would prefer to be without it.

Returning businesses to private ownership is fraught with difficulties, however, not least because of the problems of agreeing a fair price. Anything offered by a director is bound to be treated with suspicion. By definition it must be less than he or she thinks the company is worth. Anita Roddick's tentative price of 200p per share for Body Shop is seen by the City as about 20p per share too low. It is certainly a far cry from the 368p the shares reached in early 1992. Like Alan Sugar before her, Mrs Roddick may find she is forced to carry on working for outside shareholders, much as she might dislike it.

### Thames stays away from the madhouse

Investors in Thames Water can breathe a sigh of relief. The company has ruled out chasing North West Water into the commercial madhouse by mounting a takeover bid for its local electricity company - in this case London Electricity. Indeed, the uncompromising terms in which it scotched stock market rumours of such a bid - "there is no way of justifying the premium... nothing would be gained in terms of shareholder value" - only reinforces the view that North West's bid for Norwest is an empire building exercise of no commercial merit whatsoever.

To the extent that the bid does have good points, Thames is extracting the choicest and applying them to its business without the expense and trauma of a takeover. The idea of joint facilities management with London Electricity in billing, IT and repairs clearly has much to commend it. But neither side sees any reason why this should imply a full scale merger.

While it is true that there are tax and additional cost cutting benefits that can be derived by merging water and electricity utilities, these hardly compensate for the potential downside, as Thames has correctly surmised. With political, regulatory and competitive pressures growing ever more intense, about the last thing a water company should be doing is increasing its risk to the regulated sector by merging with an electricity company.

### Ignoring the real problem

A European Commission study requested by European leaders at the Cannes summit and unveiled in Brussels yesterday blames currency turmoil for a slowdown in the European economy of up to half a per cent in the overall growth rate in 1995. Surprisingly, the Commission concludes that the single currency is the answer to the problems of exchange-rate turbulence that broke out when the ERM broke down in

1992 and 1993. However, that conclusion does not appear to be warranted by much of the evidence in the report.

A central contention is that - over the longer-term - trade is affected more by structural factors and growth differentials than by currency fluctuations. Taking the period 1987-1994, hard currency France gained market share for manufacturing industry in the EU. However, if you look at the position for the manufacturing sector since 1992, matters look very different. France has lost ground.

Extending the analysis to exports outside the now slow-growing trading bloc of the EU, the devaluing countries, headed by Italy, have grown far faster than the hard currency countries like Germany and France. None of this is particularly surprising. The devaluations accomplished since 1992 haven't been wiped out by subsequent price and wage inflation so they have adjusted the real exchange rate down.

The Commission has yet to report on the highly sensitive issue of the relationship between the "ins" and the "outs" of a move to EMU that excludes Italy and the UK. However, it seems clear that the relationship will be fraught. For the moment, the principal damage being wrought on the European economy has less to do with the effect of currency turmoil - as the Commission claims - and more to do with interest rates, which in the case of France are much too high.

## Legal & General abolishes PEP charge

CLIFFORD GERMAN

The insurance giant Legal & General stepped up the war in the financial services market last night by announcing that it is to abolish initial charges on all its personal equity plans.

In moves designed to turn it from a minor league player into one of the top 10, it will also be launching a new corporate bond PEP and a new PEP that will track the FT-SE stock market index.

The new strategy is a direct challenge to Richard Branson's claims to provide low-cost PEPs for the masses. There are no immediate plans to cut charges on its unit trusts as well, but they could follow.

Legal & General is number 20 in the current league, with just £350m of PEPs under management. It aims to become one of the top 10 providers, with between 5 per cent and 10 per cent of an estimated £25bn market within three years.

Investors in L&G's five existing PEPs will no longer be asked to pay a 3 per cent initial charge to buy a plan. Annual management charges will remain at 1.25 per cent on the growth plan and 1.5 per cent on the other four. A fee will be introduced on withdrawals, however, within the first five years.

The 3 per cent initial charge will be abolished on the existing guaranteed PEP and the highly successful guaranteed corporate bond PEP, which it claims has attracted half of all the money invested in corporate bond PEPs to date, although investors will still pay a 4 per cent charge for the guarantee against loss if the stock market falls, plus a 2 per cent annual charge.

A new corporate bond PEP will be offered, investing in L&G's fixed-interest trust, offering a running yield of 8.2 per

cent tax-free after management expenses, and a redemption yield of 7.7 per cent. The 1.25 per cent annual management charge will be deducted from the income, and there will be withdrawal fees but there will be no initial charge.

An index-tracking PEP is being launched in direct competition with Richard Branson's Virgin tracker fund. Its value will rise and fall with the FT-SE all-share index.

There will be no initial charge, no withdrawal fee and annual management charges of just 0.5 per cent plus a flat fee of £25 plus VAT a year. That works out at £89.38 a year on an investment of £12,000 and £179.38 on a maximum holding of £30,000 built up over five years.

It compares with charges of £120 and £300 respectively on a standard 1 per cent fee charged by the cheapest alternative providers, rising to £180 and £450 on some of the highest-cost rival PEP providers.

L&G will sell its products through all available channels, through its direct sales force, its tied agents and through independent financial advisers and off the page in newspapers and magazines. It will continue to pay a commission of 1.5 per cent.

Faced with this concerted attack many smaller competitors will simply be unable to compete and will be unable to advertise their PEP products, Michael Hayden, L&G's managing director, retail products, said yesterday.

Legal & General is targeting the estimated 1 million individual investors who hold PEPs issued by a variety of providers and convincing them that they can transfer their existing plans to Legal & General to take advantage of low charges.

Handsome pay-off: Profits surge by 70 per cent, share earnings double and dividend is increased



Roaring ahead: Nigel Rudd, non-executive chairman

Photograph: Kalpesh Lathiga

## City welcomes £303m Pilkington cash call

TOM STEVENSON  
Deputy City Editor

The market welcomed a £303m rights issue from glass maker Pilkington yesterday, seduced by an unexpected 70 per cent jump in first-half profits and a 17.5 per cent dividend hike. The shares closed 8p higher at 189p, compared with the 155p at which the cash call was priced.

Investors were impressed by the decision to buy in the 50 per cent of formerly state-owned Italian glass group STV that Pilkington did not already own. The acquisition for £120m is expected to be immediately earnings-enhancing and strengthens the company's position in the European automotive market.

Pilkington also announced the £55m acquisition of Interpane, a Scandinavian and Swiss glass processing and distribution group, which consolidates the

company's presence in the downstream double-glazing and toughening market and underwrites a further 63,000 tonnes of production from Pilkington's float glass plants.

Strong growth in the contribution from STV, where Pilkington has cut the headcount and improved operational efficiencies, helped profits in the six months to September increase from £61m to £104m after turnover rose from £1.29bn to £1.37bn. For the first time in several years sales were lifted by price rise and margins improved by 2 percentage points.

Earnings per share more than doubled from 3p to 7.3p leaving the higher payout (1.75p versus 1.5p) well covered.

The acquisition of STV is the first big move since Nigel Rudd, chairman of Williams Holdings and East Midlands Electricity, took over from Sir Anth-

ony Pilkington in February, ending five generations of family control of the St Helens-based company.

The deal gives Pilkington a 36 per cent share of the European automotive glass market and complements existing contracts with Mercedes, BMW and Rover with the volume car makers, Fiat, VW and Ford.

The £120m cost of the second half of the business compares with the £44m paid for the first 50 per cent stake. Having stripped out costs, Pilkington estimated that it acquired STV for just 5 times its post-tax earnings and has generated a 21 per cent return on the price paid.

Pilkington said it had adopted the rights issue funding route to keep the lid on gearing, down from 66 per cent to 59 per cent between September 1994 and the half-year mark.

Investment Column, page 22

## French jobless rate up again

PAUL WALLACE  
Economics Editor

The French unemployment rate rose unexpectedly from 11.4 to 11.5 per cent of the workforce in September. This latest blow to the economy came on a day in which the unions said they would stage a day of action on 14 November against government plans to cut welfare spending and Alain Juppé, the Prime Minister, said there would be a vote of confidence on those plans following a parliamentary debate in two weeks.

The jobless count increased by 28,200, taking the total to 2,952,100 - the second consecutive increase in unemployment after 10 months of decline and the largest for two years. The main increase was concentrated in the number of jobless men under the age of 25, up 13,000 to 267,200.

The rise in unemployment

caused the franc to weaken by a centime from an early peak of DM3.4635 and rekindled scepticism in the markets about economic policy. Doubts are focused on the apparent clash between the objective of cutting unemployment on the one hand and slashing the budget deficit and sustaining the parity with the mark on the other.

At the end of last week, President Jacques Chirac said there was absolutely no reason to devalue the franc and committed himself to getting the budget deficit down. However, the rise in unemployment in September has raised concern about the viability of this commitment.

Neil MacKinnon, currency strategist at Citibank, said: "It highlights the inconsistency of objectives. His reassurance has bought time but it doesn't alter the fundamental problem that interest rates are too high at this stage of the economic cycle."

## Budget expansion plan for PFI

Treasury minister responds to industry's complaints, Peter Rodgers reports

The Chancellor is likely to announce a big expansion of the Private Finance Initiative in this month's Budget, including a drive to encourage local authorities to participate which could substantially boost the current £5bn of projects in the pipeline or agreed.

Among new measures being considered by the Treasury to boost the PFI is a set of changes in the rules governing local authority capital investment which could bring new work to manufacturing and construction industry.

Michael Jack, the financial secretary to the Treasury, made clear yesterday that every department has been under strong pressure during the pre-Budget public spending round to come up with proposals for introducing private finance.

Under the PFI, private sector companies fund investments that would otherwise be financed by the taxpayer.

"If they [departments] want to be associated with things that are going to happen, private finance is the preferred route," Mr Jack said.

The proposals to make PFI finance more accessible to local authorities were drawn up by the Department of the Environment, Mr Jack, while refusing to give details, dropped a strong hint that the Treasury looked on them favourably. He described them as "very interesting ideas."

The PFI has been widely criticised in industry, particularly among construction companies, because of its slowness to get off

the ground, amidst allegations that schemes have been bogged down in a mound of bureaucratic paper. Construction companies claim the PFI has been used as a cover for cuts in public works contracts.

Mr Jack said the Treasury acknowledged the criticisms about the way PFI projects were negotiated and wished to hear the complaints of industry and do something about them. "We are learning all the time," he said.

He has held bilateral meetings with spending ministries to identify potential logjams in Whitehall, and the Treasury has launched a big staff training programme. The aim is to bridge what is seen as a cultural divide between civil servants and the businesses with which they negotiate. "It takes time for a partnership to form," Mr Jack said.

A new Treasury assessment to be published in the next few weeks will show that the £500m of PFI projects committed at the

end of March has grown to £1.3bn, including the £140m contracts for two privately funded prisons that are about to be announced by the Home Office.

Officials said a further £400m of roadbuilding projects are also near signature, which will take the total to £1.7bn.

In the last Budget the Chancellor set a target of £5bn of PFI projects by the end of the current financial year, including £2.3bn for the proposed Channel Tunnel Rail Link. Mr Jack said he was confident the link would be agreed during the financial year. That would bring the total to £4bn - leaving only £1bn to go to meet the Chancellor's target.

It is thought that the Treasury is looking for a further £5bn of PFI projects by the end of the 1995-96 financial year. With the rail link regarded as very much a one off, that represents almost a doubling of the flow of smaller PFI projects. But Mr Jack expressed confidence in the ability of Whitehall to come up with new and viable plans, despite industry's misgivings about the pace of the programme.

# For most banks it's give and take, take, take.

BUSINESS BANKING CHARGES*					
All costs in pence	Midland	TSB	Barclays	NatWest	Bank of Scotland
DEBITS					
Cheques	48	55	58	66	18
Standing Orders	48	55	58	70	18
Direct Debit	48	55	58	66	18
Cheques Cashed	48	55	58	70	18
CREDITS					
Cheques	79	95	80	81	18
Autodebits	12.5	19	16	17.5	18

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# market report/shares

TAKING STOCK

## Budget buy-back scare gives a lift to the well-endowed

### MARKET REPORT

#### DEREK PAIN

Stock market reporter of the year



Schroders is a likely target; so is Standard Chartered, persistently firm and up another 11p at 521p.

Legal & General, the insurance giant, remained in the bid frame. The shares hit a new high, up 13.5p at 683.5p. NatWest, keen to build its fund management side, has also been linked with L&G which has £36bn under management.

The sudden urge to go private intrigued many observers. Body Shop International rose 21p to 150p; Frank G Gates, a garage group, motored 8p ahead to 71p after reporting the rest and mopping up the Gates family, with 40 per cent, may bid for the rest of the

shares, and Le Creuset, the saucpan maker, gained 18p to 177p after the chairman, Paul van Zuydam, with 73.7 per cent, announced that he wanted the rest.

Unipalm, the Internet provider, surged 52p higher to 508p as an array of influences intrigued the market. Shares of bidder UUNET, which has been strong in New York, lifting the value of its offer to nearer 550p, and talk of a counter-bid from KPN of the Netherlands, is also going the rounds; there is even talk of Microsoft, with 15 per cent of UUNET, bidding for the rest and mopping up Unipalm in the process.

Thames Water, which de-

clared it had no interest in absorbing London Electricity, rose 6p to 427p on results; London Electricity lost Monday's gain, easing to 902p.

Sears, the retailer was off 1.5p to 101.5p, ruffled by a James Capel profit downgrading. The stockbroker is said to have moved from £135m to £120m and from £150m to £140m. Other downgrades are feared.

Pilkington's acquisitions and cash call produced a 7p gain to 189p and BTR continued to edge forward, up 2.5p to 336p. There is growing US interest and at least one big buying order remains uncompleted. A year ago the shares were down to 275p. In some quarters the feeling is growing that the conglomerate is looking much sharper.

Sage fell 11p to 253p. The shares have come down from a 287p peak in the past month on rumours of a slowdown in

demand for accountancy software.

BCE, the computer games group, ignored a denial of bid talks, sticking at 24.75p. Continuing talk of a drugs deal lifted Black & Edgington 0.5p to 6.25p with 13.4 million shares printed.

Chiroscience, one of the biotech babes, was another busy traded with Seag putting volume at nearly 6 million shares. Most changed hands at 277p. The price was little changed at 282p.

A profit warning hit Life Sciences, down 36p to 86p, and Bryant, the house builder lost 6p to 98p on a 20 per cent fall in house reservations.

Black Arrow, the office furniture distributor which is subject to periodic takeover rumours, gained 4p to 43p.

Ticketing, traded at just 0.25p, remains in the doldrums with a £354,000 half-year loss. A restructuring is planned.

Little United Energy, which returned to profits in the first half of the year, is feeling sufficiently encouraged to undertake a series of investment presentations. The first takes place today, hosted by stockbroker Peel Hunt. Formerly Falcon Resources, the group has an uninspiring profit record. Its shares are 10p. They touched 62p five years ago.

Recovery at the Tamaris nursing homes chain is gathering strength. Interim profits, including an exceptional item, have reached £610,000 and around £1m (against £522,000) seems likely for the year. William Fitch, chairman, is looking for acquisitions and a deal could be announced in a few weeks. A maiden 0.021375p dividend (costing £100,000) is declared. The shares held at 2.25p.

### DATA BANK

FTSE 100  
3291.1 +19.1

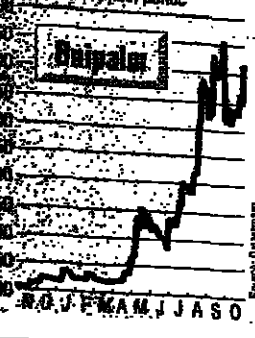
FTSE 250  
384.3 +11.8

FTSE 350  
555.9 +8.6

SEAO VOLUME  
528.7m shares,  
25,457 bargains

GTS Index  
93.47 +0.14

### SHARE SPOTLIGHT



### BANKS, MERCHANT

Stock	Price	Change	High	Low	Open	Close
Barclays	247.5	+1.5	248.0	246.0	247.0	247.5
HSBC	247.5	+1.5	248.0	246.0	247.0	247.5
London	902.0	-10.0	912.0	892.0	907.0	902.0
Midland	101.5	-1.5	103.0	100.0	102.0	101.5
NatWest	521.0	+11.0	532.0	510.0	510.0	521.0
Paragon	101.5	-1.5	103.0	100.0	102.0	101.5
Prudential	101.5	-1.5	103.0	100.0	102.0	101.5
Santander	101.5	-1.5	103.0	100.0	102.0	101.5
Standard	101.5	-1.5	103.0	100.0	102.0	101.5
TSB	101.5	-1.5	103.0	100.0	102.0	101.5
Windsor	101.5	-1.5	103.0	100.0	102.0	101.5

### BANKS, RETAIL

Stock	Price	Change	High	Low	Open	Close
ASDA	101.5	-1.5	103.0	100.0	102.0	101.5
ASDA	101.5	-1.5	103.0	100.0	102.0	101.5
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### BREWERIES

Stock	Price	Change	High	Low	Open	Close
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### BUILDING/CONSTRUCTION

Stock	Price	Change	High	Low	Open	Close
Bryant	98.0	-6.0	104.0	92.0	104.0	98.0
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Bryant	98.0	-6.0	104.0	92.0	104.0	98.0

### BUILDING MATERIALS

Stock	Price	Change	High	Low	Open	Close
ASDA	101.5	-1.5	103.0	100.0	102.0	101.5
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ASDA	101.5	-1.5	103.0	100.0	102.0	101.5
ASDA	101.5	-1.5	103.0	100.0	102.0	101.5

### CHEMICALS

Stock	Price	Change	High	Low	Open	Close
ASDA	101.5	-1.5	103.0	100.0	102.0	101.5
ASDA	101.5	-1.5	103.0	100.0	102.0	101.5
ASDA	101.5	-1.5	103.0	100.0	102.0	101.5
ASDA	101.5	-1.5	103.0	100.0	102.0	101.5
ASDA	101.5	-1.5	103.0	100.0	102.0	101.5

### DISTRIBUTORS

Stock	Price	Change	High	Low	Open	Close
ASDA	101.5	-1.5	103.0	100.0	102.0	101.5
ASDA	101.5	-1.5	103.0	100.0	102.0	101.5
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Santander	101.5	-1.5	103.0	100.0	102.0	101.5
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### BUILDING MATERIALS

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### BUILDING MATERIALS

17	10	United Gro	17	48 1/2
100	10	Wendover	100	10 1/2
132	81	Highwood	132	-1
203	181	Hillwood	199	-
50	65	JJ Group	376	-
100	100	Johnson	376	-
103	96	Shaw-Watkins	98	-1
50	50	Mann	261	-
245	218	McKee Food	195	-
821	74	Nathan Foods	105	-1
52	6	Perkington	61	-
100	100	Perkins Food	100	-
78	61	Star	51	-14
478	412	State Bldg	418	-1
440	353	Unigra	440	-1
100	114	Unigra	114	-
100	72	Unilever NV	229 1/2	-
300	25	Del Realms	275 1/2	-
1050	1050	Wilmetton	1450	-
110	80	Volsteads Pd	80	-2

GAS DISTRIBUTION			
217 1/2	235	Beth Gas	241 1/2
280	282	Calbut	257



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D-MARKS		
	1 Month	3 months
5-6	15-20	0.7107
25-30	15-20	1.0000
25-30	15-20	3.4285
10-17	15-20	1.3120
42.5-48.5	140-144	27.94
0.8-2.8	4.5-7.5	0.5448
4-14	14-15.5	20.8242
25-8	15-15	3.0771
25-25	15-75	1.1216
5-6	3-4	2.2758
25-30	150-200	4.4517
37-41	112-130	86.91
180-185	415-488	4.7144
38-37	111-108	0.0072
13-10	33-28	1.0705
4-44	10-30	5.4015
7-17	30-45	1.3065
14-11	39-33	0.8279
0-4	4-8	0.8691
38-22	100-85	2.0551
D-MARKS		
	Starting	Dollar
123.58	81.75	
1.82774	0.3848	
83.7288	34.18	
43.813	26	
233.87	148.20	
5.7468	3.6280	
733.8	450	
1.7658	3.6460	
62.28	28.62	
8.7003	3.4710	
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# The return of Jonathan Davies to rugby union could herald the start of a new era for Wales

By Paul Stephens

## RFU standing firm behind the 120-day rule

Football Board declared the game open in August and we have to react to that. We have to be more professional in our approach."

The findings of a report by an EFDC working party will be announced at a special meeting on 13 November.

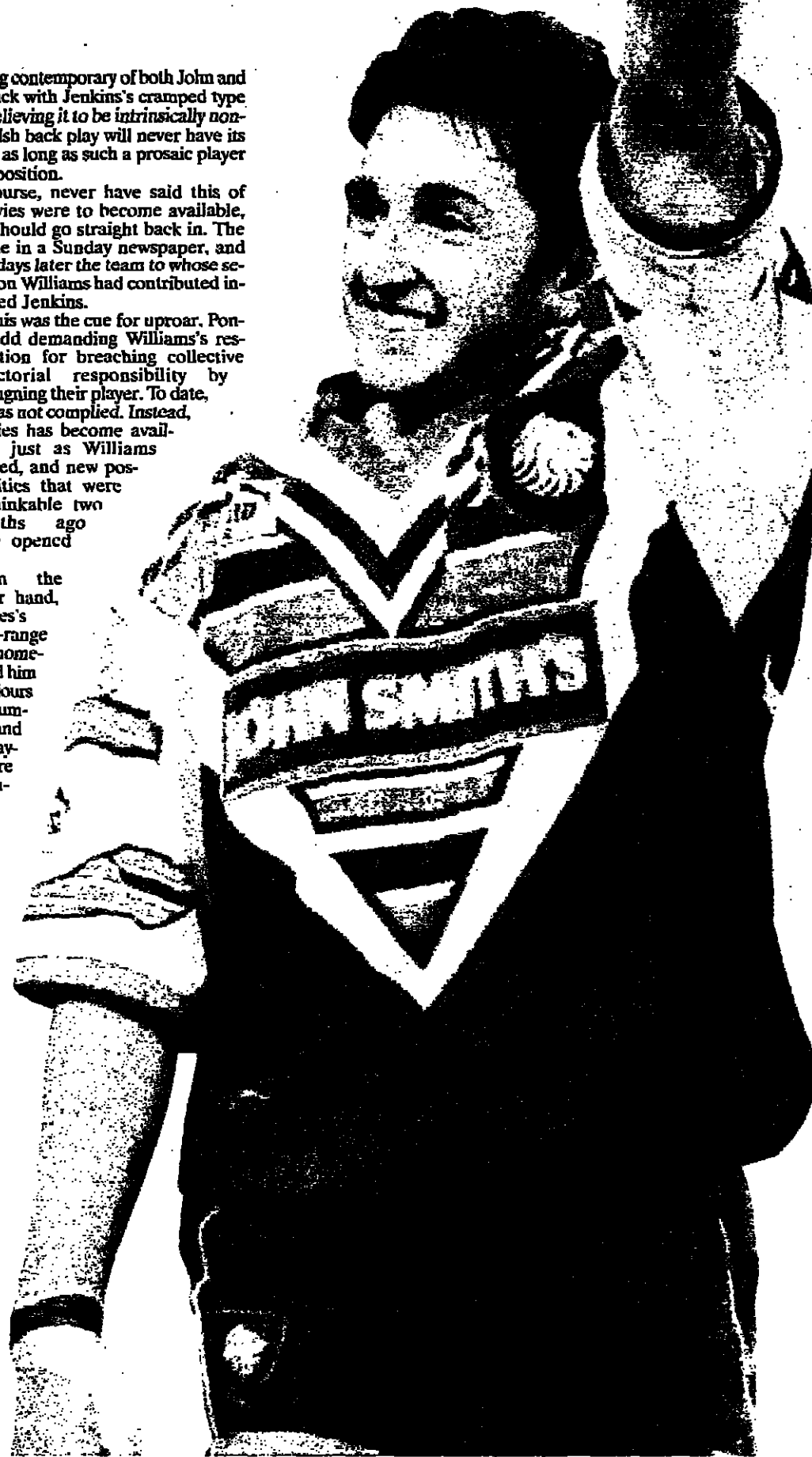
■ Two Wasps defectors to Newcastle, Dean Ryan and Steve Bates, are in the London Division squad to play Western Samoa on 29 November. There is a vacancy at stand-off and the coach, Tony Jordan has not ruled out the possibility of Rob Andrew opting to turn out.

# Sir John Hall's zeal is opening up the North-east frontier

year-old Colin Bennell, a  
card from Ross-on-Wye, 6-  
6-1. Bates begins his vald  
ry Nationals today against N  
Weal, of Hampshire.

Rachel Violette, the 22-ye  
old daughter of Dennis Violette  
the former Manchester Unit  
and England forward, be  
Monique Javer, 6-1, 6-3.

**Results, Sporting Digest, page**



**Part of the union: Jonathan Davies confirms his move to Cardiff** Photograph: Brendan Monks

1

2017-01-01

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# Internationals ignite transfer market

**Rugby Union**  
STEVE BALE

Rugby's brand-new transfer market went into a frenzy yesterday when Jonathan Davies was accompanied by Jonathan Griffiths in coming home to Wales, three internationals – Tony Underwood and Doddie Weir of Scotland – prepared to join Newcastle, and two more – Mike Hall and Gareth Llewellyn of Wales registered for Warrington.

Cardiff finally got their man when they suddenly agreed terms with Warrington to release Davies from his contract, an increased offer of £55,000 having been turned down on Monday. He could go into the team as soon as Saturday's Welsh First Division game against Aberavon.

Davies, who won 29 caps as Wales outside-half between 1985 and 1988, has signed a

week too late for him to be considered for the Wales team to play Fiji on Saturday week but even at 33, a venerable age for a stand-off, he has every prospect of gaining a 30th cap in the Five Nations' Championship in the new year.

Underwood, meanwhile, will be in Newcastle today to sign his contract with the Second Division strugglers but the gaff was blown when Leicester decided to reveal all once he had informed them of his departure.

The three newcomers follow Rob Andrew, Dean Ryan, Steve Bates and Nick Popplewell to the North-east though none except Andrew is eligible to participate in Newcastle's fight against relegation until the latter stages of the season.

Davies and Griffiths are the first British players to avail themselves of the gateway opened by the International Board once it had opened rugby union to professionalism. Griffiths is rejoining Llanelli for



**THE MUNIFICENT SEVEN**  
TONY UNDERWOOD (Leicester to Newcastle) GARY ARMSTRONG (Jed-Forest to Newcastle) DODDIE WEIR (Melrose to Newcastle) MIKE HALL (Cardiff to Wasps) GARETH LLEWELLYN (Neath to Wasps) JONATHAN DAVIES (Warrington (league) to Cardiff (union)) JONATHAN GRIFFITHS (St Helens (league) to Llanelli)

a nominal fee from St Helens, and other exiles are bound to follow. Kevin Ellis, a former Bridgend scrum-half, is talking to Neath and Swansea are courting the Lions prop David Young.

In the end, Warrington thought better of hanging to a plainly disaffected player, though yesterday Davies had nothing but the kindest consideration for those he is leaving behind. "Since I moved to rugby league six years ago I have had a fantastic time and would

not change a minute of it," he said in a statement issued by an agent.

"I can honestly say that I have given everything both mentally and physically to the teams I have played for and I have been well-rewarded not only financially but in fulfilment, friendship and team spirit. My departure is no reflection of my feelings for the game any more than my departure six years ago was a reflection on union.

"In 1989 I was unsure about my future and league offered me security as well as a sporting challenge. Now that I am approaching the end of my playing days the motivation is the same. All the opportunities for me to secure my long-term future are in south Wales. The fact that I can take advantage of those as well as play for Cardiff is a chance I could not resist."

Assuming Cardiff to have needed something in excess of

£60,000 to clinch the deal with Warrington, they could recoup the transfer fee in one go if the gate for the Aberavon match were to be increased by 10,000 on the strength of an appearance by Davies.

Cardiff are certainly aware of the public relations value of their distinguished recruit, though yesterday Gareth Davies, the club's chief executive, preferred to keep the welcome low-key. "He is a big-name player. The publicity which will follow from this will

be a big boost for Cardiff and Wales."

Andrew's triple signing for Newcastle is not quite all it seems. Weir last night admitted that he had signed a registration form to keep his options open but said he not discussed a contract and knew of no announcement set for today. Underwood, meanwhile, confirmed his departure from Leicester only when his club of the past eight years did it for him.

He is under instructions not to discuss his transfer until today but appreciates the seriousness of Newcastle's predicament at the nether end of the Second Division. On the assumption – given further credence by the Rugby Football Union president, Bill Bishop, yesterday – that the 120-day qualification period will remain in force, Underwood will be eligible for only the final four league games, by which time Newcastle may already be as good as down.

He does not – dare not – see it that way. "I am going up there confident that relegation will not happen," he said last night. Otherwise he is coy about why he should switch from the top end of the First Division.

"Really, I am not in a position now to give all my reasons," he added. Tony Russ, Leicester coaching director, was more forthcoming: "He has been offered a package of rugby plus a career opportunity."

Davies, Griffiths, Underwood, Armstrong and Weir were not the only contributors to yesterday's extreme transfer turbulence. Wasps have begun their fightback after losing Andrew and the rest by registering two Welsh internationals, Hall of Cardiff and Llewellyn of Neath.

And Leeds, of the Fifth Division North, have taken on Davies' stand-off successor at Llanelli, Colin Stephens, as player-coach.

## Amokachi boost for Everton

**Football**

Daniel Amokachi has come through a fitness test on his right knee and will be available for Everton's European Cup-Winners' Cup second-round match with Feyenoord tomorrow.

Amokachi damaged the knee in the 1-0 defeat by Aston Villa on Saturday, but fears of cartilage problems have been dismissed. The Nigerian international's fitness brought relief for his manager, Joe Royle, who could be without almost £20m-worth of players for the second leg, which starts goalless.

David Unsworth is the latest casualty, ruled out after straining his back in the reserve team's defeat at Oldham on Monday. Anders Limpar damaged a foot in training and is rated doubtful, while Vinny Samways (hamstring) and Earl Barrett (knee) are definitely out. With Andrei Kanchelskis ineligible and Duncan Ferguson in prison, Everton's resources are stretched.

Jon O'Connor, a 19-year-old centre-half, has yet to make his first-team debut, but travels to Rotterdam today along with midfielder Joe Parkinson, who has recovered from a foot injury that kept him out for five weeks.

Craig Short, who has been in hospital undergoing tests for a virus, could be plunged straight back into senior action. "He's English, he's alive and so he's in," said Royle. "I mean no disrespect to Craig, but we have lost another two English players in

David Unsworth and Vinny Samways, but it is something we just have to get on with."

Celtic, who lost 1-0 at Parc des Princes in the first leg of their European Cup-Winners' Cup match against Paris St-Germain, will put up the full house signs at Parkhead tomorrow, but the Glasgow club have failed in their attempt to take the capacity of the new ground to more than 37,000.

This summer, Celtic opened their £17m North Stand, which houses 26,000 fans and took the capacity to 34,000. All the seats are sold for the return leg against PSG, but red tape has halted plans to open a temporary structure holding 3,000 fans at the west end of the ground.

"The temporary stand will not be open for the PSG match," the Celtic spokesman, Peter McLean, said. "All those supporters who have been sold tickets for the temporary stand will be accommodated elsewhere in the ground on Thursday. There are no other tickets available and it simply shows the incredible interest in the club at the moment that the tickets were snapped up very quickly."

McLean said there were "a number of areas" which had to be sorted out before the temporary stand could be given the go-ahead by the authorities. "The contractors are compiling a report, and by the end of the week we should know how quickly we can progress," he said.



Salim Malik, the former Pakistan captain cleared of bribery charges, arrives at Perth yesterday to join his country's tour of Australia

Photograph: Reuters; Report, page 25

## Martin may play despite fractured finger

**Cricket**

England are still hoping to play Peter Martin in their penultimate warm-up match in East London before the first Test against South Africa. The Lancashire seamer became the first injury victim of the tour when he dislocated and fractured his right ring finger during last week's day-night victory over Eastern Transvaal.

Martin was selected for the four-day match against Border, starting on Thursday, and Ray Illingworth is still keen for him to play if possible. "Peter can bowl without any problem," he said. "It is a question of whether we can hide him in the field."

There is only one more game after this week's match before the Test series gets under way in Pretoria.

If Martin cannot play against Border, who lost by innings to Natal yesterday, then it is possible that Devon Malcolm may take his place.

## Perseverance pays off for Chang and Ferreira

**Tennis**

Michael Chang and Wayne Ferreira survived three-set matches to advance to the third round of the Paris Open yesterday. Chang, seeded fourth, rallied to beat Byron Black of Zimbabwe, 4-6, 6-3, 6-3, while the ninth-seeded Ferreira had a 6-2, 5-7, 6-4, victory over the American Richey Reneberg.

Pete Sampras, the top seed who is assured of regaining the No 1 ranking for at least a week, begins his challenge today. Sampras then goes on to Frankfurt to defend his title in the ATP Tour Championship on 14 November.

Chang used his strong service to beat Black, firing 14 aces with a speed up to 193 kilometres an hour (120 mph). He once strung three aces in a row to fight off set points early in the first set before dropping behind.

"It's nice to be able to throw in some big serves at important moments," Chang said. "It certainly gives you confidence because you know you can win some free points." He came back strongly to win the two-hour match.

Ferreira wasted a match point in the second set at 5-4 and Reneberg came back to force a third set before bowing to Ferreira.

Andre Agassi, currently ranked No 1, won the Paris tournament last year but a recurrence of his chest-muscle injury last week at Essen, forced him to withdraw from the event. As a result, he will lose those ATP ranking points, allowing Sampras to move up from second place.

The rankings are based on the results of a player's best 14 tournament results over the last 12 months. Sampras has won the Wimbledon title and the US Open this year while Agassi captured the Australian Open.

Only Agassi, the injured Michael Stich and Yevgeny Kafelnikov are missing from the top 15 players in the world in this Paris tournament.

Loud and proud: Henri Leconte celebrates victory over Aaron Krickstein in the Paris Open

Photograph: Reuters

## COULD YOU GET TEN SOLDIERS ACROSS AFRICA, NOT JUST TEN ACROSS?

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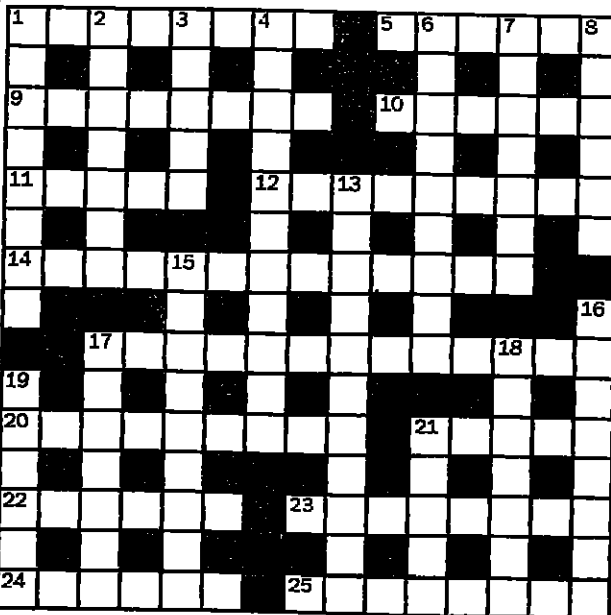
Wednesday 1 November 1995 Registered as a newspaper with the Post Office

## THE INDEPENDENT CROSSWORD

No. 2820, Wednesday 1 November

By Aquila

Tuesday's Solution



STOCKING CHANGE  
P A A A A A B  
A R B I T E R P I O N E E R  
R E C L A M A T I O N  
T E E T H Y A C H T S M A N  
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L E A R A O R F  
S T A T I O N T I M P A N I  
E S P I E M E N T  
T H R E E C O R N E R E D

### ACROSS

- 1 Pawn Defence? (8)
- 5 Turns out last of Sophocles' works (6)
- 9 Bill Sikes' dog shot in the heart (5-3)
- 10 Scattered disputes requiring energy (6)
- 11 In chilling fashion, Mafia home does not open (5)
- 12 Bestselling pop record, the first in a series (6,3)
- 14 Pat's character unblemished? (6-7)
- 17 Criticism of Sandra in movie release (13)
- 20 Requiring tremendous effort, as in making neat capture? (9)
- 21 Grace of a tiny swallow? (5)

- 22 Nettle alongside river? See the warden! (6)
- 23 Girl's characteristic to be absent-minded (8)
- 24 Double one, say, spotted in a masquerade (6)
- 25 One up a tree — once a star of variety (8)

### DOWN

- 1 Wild bluetits or what you will, for example (8)
- 2 Sitting bower? (7)
- 3 Rough run with an agent (5)
- 4 Carpentry tool for testing aircraft (6-5)
- 6 One who presents Judy as a wife battered in front of the kids? (9)

- 7 Atmosphere left on board Canberra, for example? (7)
- 8 Rows of pictures (6)
- 13 Nomadic one in average Frankish dynasty (11)
- 15 A nice, pure stew for a foodie (9)
- 16 Pangolin with a taste for formic acid? (8)
- 17 A companion married in RADA, possibly (7)
- 18 Flash-point? (7)
- 19 Hull supporter, taking daughter, is thus made secure (6)
- 21 Emma label? (5)